# MUS 311

# Digital Music: Performance, Remixing and DJ-ing

S2 Day 2017

*Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies*

# Contents

**Disclaimer**

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# General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Adrian Renzo
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Credit points
3

Prerequisites
39cp at 100 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit builds practical skills to mix music for a live audience. Lectures and production lab workshops develop the techniques necessary for DJ-ing and laptop performance. The broad objective is to develop students' awareness of mixing techniques in the live performance of electronic music, to develop creative skills in constructing studio-based DJ sets, and to collaborate creatively with colleagues. Students are introduced to Ableton Live software as a tool for laptop performance and production. This unit caters to a variety of skill levels with both beginning and advanced students welcome.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

# Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Apply concepts of music design and theory to DJ performance

Critically analyse mixing technique and song selection

Select and deploy appropriate mixing techniques

Use mixing technologies

Demonstrate creativity through expressive techniques

# Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|---|---|---|---|
| Listening Test | 30% | No | Week 6 |
| Peer Assessment | 15% | No | Weeks 9-11 |
| Live Performance | 55% | No | Weeks 9-11 |

## Listening Test

Due: **Week 6**
Weighting: **30%**

### Assessment Outline

This assessment tests an important skill practised by DJs: the ability to recognise when music has been edited, looped, sampled, remixed, or otherwise manipulated.

Practice tasks (along with an answer sheet) will be available on iLearn from Week 1. The practice tasks and answer sheet will provide you with early feedback on your progress in this unit.

### Requirements

**The test will require you to use your own headphones**.

In the Listening Test you will be given a series of extracts from various DJ mixes. The extracts will draw on songs from a playlist that you will have access to from Week 1. Your task will be to identify how the songs have been changed in the DJ mixes.

### Submission Instructions

The Listening Test will take place in class time in Week 6. Answers will be written on a hard-copy sheet to be submitted by the end of the class. You may take up to 50 minutes to complete the test. Audio files will be played through headphones connected to the workstations in Y3A-223. **Please remember to bring your headphones with you.**

### Assessment Criteria

Marks will be awarded according to the number of correct responses submitted.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Critically analyse mixing technique and song selection

## Peer Assessment

Due: **Weeks 9-11**
Weighting: **15%**

## Assessment Outline

For this assessment you will write peer-evaluations of seven (7) performances. In class time, you will be given advice on how to write effective, constructive feedback.

## Requirements

- You must use the peer-evaluation sheet provided in class as a template.
- A schedule of performances will be available on iLearn. You may choose to peer-review any 7 performances which occur in your allocated class time.
- The minimum word length per evaluation is 100 words. There is no upper word limit for this task.

## Submission Instructions

Your peer-evaluation sheet must be submitted to Turnitin/iLearn on the day that you complete your final peer-review. The file that you submit should be named as follows:

[Surname - ID number - Peer-evaluation].

Example:

Renzo - 44441234 - Peer-evaluation

## Assessment Criteria

Peer-reviews will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Number of reviews submitted.
- Ability to identify relevant strengths of each performance.
- Ability to identify potential areas for improvement in each performance.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Critically analyse mixing technique and song selection

# Live Performance

Due: **Weeks 9-11**
Weighting: **55%**

## Assessment Outline

In this assessment, you will perform a 10-minute DJ set using the Session View of Ableton Live, liaise with other students to ensure that you 'mix into' your set smoothly, and submit a self-evaluation sheet (available on iLearn). The performance schedule will be available on iLearn by 5pm Friday 22 September.

## Requirements

- You must submit your Live Set to the MMCCS server by 11am on the day of your

performance. A performance schedule will be available on iLearn by 5pm Friday 22 September.

- You must submit a self-evaluation sheet on Turnitin/iLearn by 5pm on the day of your performance. The template for this task will be available on iLearn.

- The Live Performance must last for 10 minutes. You may use up to 2 minutes extra for transitions to and from your set.

- Ableton Live's Session View must be used as the 'hub' for the set. Turntables and/or other instruments and controllers may be used as supplements.

- You will need to liaise with the people playing before and after you, to ensure a smooth transition between DJ performances.

- All tracks must be high-quality audio files. Lossless formats such as WAV and AIFF are preferred, although MP3s encoded at 320kbps are also acceptable. Audio tracks ripped from YouTube clips are not acceptable for the purposes of this assessment.

- You may be required to attend a separate viva voce regarding this assignment, to elaborate on your preparation process.

- If you choose to use your own equipment for the performance, you are responsible for ensuring that your hardware and software are in good working order.

- You should keep at least 3 external back-ups of your work at all times. The hard drives of computers in the lab can be erased at any time, so these computers should not be used as back-up storage.

- IMPORTANT: Click 'Collect All and Save' before submitting your assignment.

## Submission Instructions

- You must submit your Live Set to the MMCCS server by 11am on the day of your performance. A performance schedule will be available on iLearn by 5pm Friday 22 September.

- You must submit a self-evaluation sheet on Turnitin/iLearn by 5pm on the day of your performance. The template for this task will be available on iLearn.

## Assessment Criteria

Marks will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- Ability to apply concepts of music design and theory to DJ performance.
- Level of mixing techniques.
- Competence in the use of technologies.
- Creative adaptation of sound materials.
- Quality of self-assessment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply concepts of music design and theory to DJ performance
- Select and deploy appropriate mixing techniques
- Use mixing technologies
- Demonstrate creativity through expressive techniques

# Delivery and Resources

## Delivery Mode

This unit consists of online lectures and on-campus tutorials.

## Class Times

Classes take place in Y3A-223. For more details please see the MQ Timetables website.

http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au

## Required Technology

Ableton Live 9 is available for student use on all computers in the lab. (External licences are not available.) You may use the lab to work on your assignments at any time that no class is being held in the room. The lab is open from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. Please see MQ Timetables to check when the lab is free.

http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au

You will need to supply your own headphones for this course. The headphones do not need to be premium-grade DJ headphones, but they do need to cover your ears and block out a reasonable amount of noise. You will need to use your own headphones in order to complete the Listening Test in Week 6.

You will need to supply your own data storage hardware. It is expected that you will regularly make three copies of your work on your own external hard drives, computers, and/or USB flash drives.

## Hardware and Software Compatability

It is students' responsibility to ensure that any work undertaken outside of the MMCCS is fully functional within and compatible with the Mac version of Ableton Live currently installed on the computers in the MMCCS labs. Additional VST instruments and effects not native to Ableton Live should not be used in submitted assignments unless you are also providing the hardware on which such instruments will run.

# Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

## Additional Information

MMCCS website: https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

The MMCCS in-session re-mark application is available at: http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Information is correct at the time of publication.

# Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

# Graduate Capabilities

## Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Apply concepts of music design and theory to DJ performance
- Select and deploy appropriate mixing techniques
- Use mixing technologies
- Demonstrate creativity through expressive techniques

### Assessment task

- Live Performance

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Apply concepts of music design and theory to DJ performance
- Critically analyse mixing technique and song selection
- Select and deploy appropriate mixing techniques
- Use mixing technologies
- Demonstrate creativity through expressive techniques

## Assessment tasks

- Listening Test
- Peer Assessment
- Live Performance

# Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Critically analyse mixing technique and song selection
- Use mixing technologies

## Assessment tasks

- Listening Test
- Peer Assessment
- Live Performance

# Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Apply concepts of music design and theory to DJ performance

- Select and deploy appropriate mixing techniques

- Use mixing technologies

- Demonstrate creativity through expressive techniques

## Assessment task

- Live Performance

# Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Select and deploy appropriate mixing techniques

- Demonstrate creativity through expressive techniques

## Assessment task

- Live Performance

# Extensions and Late Penalties
## Extensions

If you experience serious and unavoidable disruption and are unable to attend the Listening Test, a peer-review session, or your allotted performance time, please submit a Disruption to Studies form (http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html). Once your application has been approved, you will be provided with the details of when and how to submit your work.

## Late Penalties

Students who fail to attend the Listening Test (without submitting a Disruption to Studies application) may be given an opportunity to sit a supplementary test. In such cases, a late penalty of 10% of the total possible mark per day will apply.

Students who fail to complete the peer assessment (without submitting a Disruption to Studies application) may be given an opportunity to complete a peer-review task at a later date. In such cases, a late penalty of 10% of the total possible mark per day will apply.

Students who fail to attend their allotted performance time (without submitting a Disruption to Studies application) may be given an opportunity to perform at a later date. In such cases, a late penalty of 10% of the total possible mark per day will apply.