

6.19 Module 19: Dissertation by Practice

Module Title	Dissertation by Practice
Module NFQ Level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	8
Module number/Reference	BAAMT301
Parent Programme	BA (Hons) in Audio and Music Technology
Stage of Parent Programme	3
Semester	1, 2
Module Credit Units (FET/HET/ECTS)	ECTS
Module Credit number of Units	20
List the teaching and learning modes	FT
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)	Learner has earned Level 5 qualification. No previous experience is required
Pre-requisite module titles	None
Co-requisite module titles	None
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No
Staff qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required. (staff includes workplace personnel who are responsible for learners such as apprentices, trainees and learners in clinical placements)	Staff are required to have at least a Master's qualification in Audio and Music Technology or related discipline. Industry experience would be a benefit but is not a requirement. Staff are expected to have the Certificate in Training and Education qualification from Griffith College or its equivalent.
Staff/learner ratio per centre (or instance of the module)	For lecture load, ratio of 1:50 lecturer to learner is required and in lab sessions the maximum allowed is 1:25 The lecturer will also have 1 hour per week set aside in their timetable for 1:1 contact with learners who require it or have particular items they want to discuss.
Maximum number of learners per centre (or instance of the module)	50
Duration of the Module	Two Academic Semester, 24 weeks teaching
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week.	3
Physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)	One lecture hall with capacity at least 50 and one computer lab with capacity of 25.

Analysis of Required Learning Effort										
Effort while in contact with staff										
Classroom and Demonstrations		Mentoring and small group tutoring		Other (Specify)		Directed e-learning (hours)	Independent learning (hours)	Other hours (specify)	Work-based learning hours of learning effort	Total Effort (hours)
Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner					
48	1:50	24	1:25				428			500
Allocation of marks (within the module)										
						Continuous Assessment	Supervised Project	Proctored practical	Proctored Written Examination	Total
Percentage contribution						15%	70%	15%		100%

6.19.1 Module Aims Objectives

The objectives of this module are to stimulate curiosity in exploring new ideas through research; to develop independent research and learning skills through the application of tested methodologies; to develop the skills necessary to plan and produce an extended, formally written document; to develop creativity through independent practical work and expand knowledge in areas of personal interest.

The module aims to develop the learner's research and learning skills. It also aims to stimulate the learner's imagination and creativity through research by practice, or writing and researching, and to enable the learner to critically consider the chosen subject of the dissertation.

The practice element should strongly inform the written element. The research of current practitioners in the chosen field should illustrate potential points of departure into new and hitherto undeveloped areas of interest.

6.19.2 Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- MLO 19.1 Competently select and apply appropriate research to the implementation of academic research or research by practice.
- MLO 19.2 Complete significant research into specialist topics and present findings, insights, hypotheses, or original creative outcomes reflecting a thorough comprehension of the concepts and techniques involved.
- MLO 19.3 Design and manage a personal programme of study within non-negotiable deadlines.
- MLO 19.4 Demonstrate critical knowledge in an area that is of personal interest and also reflects the general content and ethos of the programme.
- MLO 19.5 Produce a dissertation, in writing, or in writing and by practice, that poses and answers specified research questions relating to music, music production, or socio-cultural topics.
- MLO 19.6 Write coherently, respecting academic conventions, and presenting information in a professional manner.

6.19.3 Rationale for inclusion of the module in the programme and its contribution to the overall IPLOs

This core module will be the culmination of the learner's study. Learners will explore, through research and writing, subjects deemed worthy of academic investigation, or the expansion and development of new ideas through practice. The learner may select to present an academic dissertation or a dissertation by practice. This module contributes significantly to the learners' achievement of Programme learning outcome 4 while also contributing to Outcomes 11 and 12.

6.19.4 Information Provided to Learners about the Module

Learners enrolled on this module will receive a copy of the module descriptor and assignment briefs, including an outline of the criteria for assessment.

Previous examples of assignments are also presented to the class.

6.19.5 Module Content, Organisation and Structure

The organisation of the module is to deliver theory through one 2-hour lecture per week, and a 1-hour tutorial.

However due to the individual requirements of each Learner, as the projects progress, this time will be broken down into individual time slots per learner for support and feedback.

Module Content

This is a bespoke or learner-centred module and learners are expected to define much of the content of the learning. The fundamental skill of learning to write using formal English exists in tandem with an in-depth exploration of the chosen topic.

Approaches to writing a dissertation

- Selecting a topic, with reference to the spirit and ethos of the programme.
- Defining key questions that will prompt research and focus the structure and content of the dissertation.
- Creating and regularly up-dating a plan of the dissertation.
- Keeping a detailed log of the research process.
- Analysing primary and secondary research material.
- Writing and communicating clearly sophisticated concepts and ideas.
- Working to specific deadlines.

6.19.6 Module Teaching and Learning Strategy

This module is delivered through a combination lectures and tutorials. Lectures will cover theory and group discussion of research proposals. Learners will also be required to attend individual formative assessment meetings with their tutor as a means of feedback and support. As this module centres around the individual dissertations, learners will be required to put in a large amount of independent work outside of the timetabled hours.

Activity	Teaching / Learning Strategy	Learning Environment
Lecture (48 hours)	Lectures / participative discussions of research topics / case studies of research proposals and dissertations / academic writing instruction	College
Tutorial (24 hours)	One-to-one support and feedback with appointed tutor / direction with research proposal and project including planning, objectives and research questions	College
Assignment (200 hours)	Practice learning and perfecting dissertation by practice skills	College
Independent Work (228 hours)	Directed and self-directed learning / working to meet set deadlines by tutors / home study	College / Home

6.19.7 Timetabling, Learner Effort and Credit

The module is timetabled as one 3-hour session to the whole class, consisting of one 2-hour lecture and a 1-hour tutorial.

The module is a 20-credit module in order to ensure that the project has a scope that is achievable for the learner, and yet allows a substantial piece of work to be completed.

6.19.8 Work-based Learning and Practice-placement

There is no work based learning or practical placement involved in the module.

6.19.9 E-Learning

The College VLE is used to disseminate notes, advice and online resources to support the learners. The learners are also given access to Lynda.com as a resource for reference.

6.19.10 Module Physical Resource Requirements

Requirements are for a fully equipped lecture hall and access for tutors to a meeting room when required, for individual formative assessments.

6.19.11 Reading lists and other learning materials

Recommended Reading

Bell, J. & Waters, S. (2014) *Doing your research project: a guide for first-time researchers*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Walliman, N. (2013) *Your undergraduate dissertation: the essential guide for success*, London: SAGE.

Secondary Reading

Cotterill, S. (2011) *Critical thinking skills: developing effective analysis and argument*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Cotterill, S. (2014) *Dissertations and project reports: a step by step guide*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Day, T. (2013) *Success in academic writing*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Thomas, G. (2011) *Doing research*. Houndsmills Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Williams, K. (2013) *Planning your dissertation*. Houndsmills Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Williams, K. & Carroll, J. (2009) *Referencing and understanding plagiarism*. Houndsmills Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

6.19.12 Specifications for Module Staffing Requirements

For each instance of the module, there will be one lecturer qualified to at least Master's level in Music Technology or equivalent and with a relevant third level teaching qualification (e.g. Certificate in Training and Education). Depending on numbers a lab assistant may be required. Where this is the case the Assistant will be required to have a sound understanding of sound design, either through industry experience or academic qualification. For example, a postgraduate student of Audio and Music Production may be suitable to assist the lecturer in lab sessions. Any lab assistant will work under the supervision of the lecturer.

6.19.13 Module Summative Assessment Strategy

The following represents the breakdown of marks for the dissertation by research:

Element No	Weight	Type	Description	Learning Outcomes Assessed
1	70%	Project	Written Dissertation of 10,000 – 12,000 words, excluding bibliography and appendices	17.1, 17.2, 17.5, 17.6
2	15%	Continuous Assessment	Process / Management	17.3
3	15%	Project	Presentation / Defence	17.4

The following represents the breakdown of marks for the dissertation by practice:

Element No	Weighting	Type	Description	Learning Outcomes Assessed
1	30%	Practical	Practical Application / Work	17.1, 17.2,
2	40%	Assignment	Comprehensive Written Report of 6,000 – 8,000 words	17.5, 17.6
3	15%	Continuous Assessment	Process / Management	17.3
4	15%	Presentation	Presentation / Defence	17.4

6.19.14 Sample Assessment Materials

Dissertation by Practice:

Dissertation by contains the following elements:

Practical Application: (30%)

Introduction:

There are no fixed parameters to the format of the Practical Application / Work. Depending on the nature of your research by practice, disseminating the practical outcome of the research might lead to a performance, an installation, a demonstration, a workshop or an academic presentation of media generated by the research question and methodology.

Brief:

The Practical Application / Work should be fully realised, and your research findings disseminated in a form that is developed in the process of the investigation. If required, you are responsible for recruiting, managing and leading a team, to assist in the preparation, archiving and realisation of your Practical Application / Work. Through the tutorial process, the means for disseminating the Practical Application / Work, in terms of resources, venue and any other requirements that are specific to your project, will be discussed.

Aims:

- to stimulate curiosity in exploring new ideas through research;
- to develop independent research and learning skills through the application of tested methodologies;
- to develop the skills necessary to plan and produce an extended, formally written document;
- to develop creativity through independent practical work and expand knowledge in areas of personal interest.

Requirements:

1. Dissertation: research by Practice

One from the following list of assessment criteria will be negotiated with the module tutor.

1. Creative Practice
2. Recording
3. Musical Composition

Written report: 40%**Introduction:**

The investigation and research you undertake in this module is student-driven. Under the initial supervision of a tutor you are to develop and focus your research questions and methodologies into an aspect of practice as research. The early stages will lead to a proposal being made to the supervisory team. You are expected to explore a variety of forms as a means to disseminate your investigation at various stages and develop this through to final submission. Also, you are expected to maintain an archive throughout the project in the format most appropriate to the nature of your work.

Brief:

You must submit a Written Report that facilitates dissemination of the nature of investigation. This is to be a negotiated body of work which provides a written contextual analysis of the practical investigation. It will take the form of a written document (6000 to 8,000 words maximum). The form of submission should be negotiated with tutors.

Aims:

- Practice independent research and learning skills;
- Test methodologies of practice-as-research;
- Apply aspects of a personal development plan;
- Explore how practice can inform theoretical knowledge;
- Appraise the skills necessary to disseminate research findings in forms that respect academic conventions. Requirements: 1 x Written report (6,000 – 8,000 words)

The following assessment criteria may be used to assess Written Report Assignment two

1. Research and Sources
2. Knowledge and Understanding
3. Analysis and Argument
4. Structure and Organisation
5. Standard of Presentation
6. Effectiveness of Written English
7. Bibliography and References.

Presentation / Defence (15%)

Introduction

The presentation / defence together allow for an evaluation of the development, presentation of your work and contextualisation. Your presentation / defence will take place at an agreed time following your submission of the main body of work.

Brief

In presentation / defence you will be asked to articulate your understanding of the issues involved in the assignment. Particular emphasis will be placed on evaluation, contextualisation and meeting of learning outcomes. Where applicable the issues discussed may include, your interpretation of the assignment brief, working processes employed in developing the dissertation, your approach to the logistical parameters encountered, and aesthetic considerations.

Aims:

- to disseminate the learner's reflections and critical evaluation throughout the composition process
- to allow the learner to disseminate a reflective commentary following completion of the dissertation.
- to promote the skills of discussing and commenting on academic bodies of work.

The following Assessment Criteria will be used to assess your presentation / defence:

- Understanding and articulation of key concepts
- Coherence, clarity and conciseness of language
- Understanding and articulation of research and analysis
- Evaluation upon the project