A LEVEL MUSIC TECHNOLOGY INDUCTION TASK

Task 1 - 2hrs

Part A: Follow & Download

Download VCV Rack for your Windows PC/ Mac

On YouTube follow and Subscribe to:

Pensado's Place
Andrew Huang
Produce Like A Pro
Music Theory Guy
Rick Beato
Mix With The Masters

It is worth having a little browse through these channels as these will be referred to during the course

Part b:

Complete the following interactive lesson to learn about the basics of synthesizers. Synths are a really important aspect of A level music technology and it is really important you get a solid understanding of the basics when starting the course. https://learningsynths.ableton.com/

Next, watch my video on using the VCV rack software and complete the task of making a basic modular synth. The is a great way of getting hands on experience with a synth. Don't stress about the mechanics too much!! Just focus on exploring the different sounds and what certain functions do to the sound.

Take a screen shot or video and submit this on FROG for Task 1

Task 2: Glossary Items - 1hr

Research the following terms:

- *Loop (production)*
- *Sample (production)*
- *Breakbeat (production)*
- *Cutoff Filter (synthesis)*
- *Resonance (synthesis)*
- *Delay (effect)*
- *Reverb (effect)*
- *Double Tracking (production)*
- *Compression (dynamic processing)*

Create a short 'glossary-style' paragraph for each term. These entries must be in your own words and demonstrate your understanding of each of the terms and their role in modern music technology. You may use diagrams or pictures to illustrate your answers

Submit under task 2 on FROG as a Word or PowerPoint doc

Task 3: Production Analysis - 1hr

Listen to '*Brimful Of Asha*' by Cornershop and '*Brimful of Asha*' (Norman Cook Remix) also by Cornershop

Using as many glossary terms as possible describe the production techniques used in both versions. You shouldn't describe musical techniques (playing style, keys, scales) but how the recording was produced (mixing, arrangement, recording effects, balance, use of technology). This is an opportunity to demonstrate your current understanding of music technology as well as your listening and analytical skills. A question very similar to this will

appear of your Listening and Analysing paper at the end of your second year. At the bottom of this document is a sheet to help you complete this task!

Example analysis to help you:
http://www.audio-issues.com/music-analysis/music-production-analysis-norah-jones-happy-pills-2/

Stimulus Material Brimful Of Asha – Cornershop https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StWfWc0qzOM Brimful Of Asha (Norman Cook Remix) – Cornershop https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LBnMRWeV-E

To be submitted under task 3 as a word document

Task 4: Microphones 2hrs

Purchase a copy of As and A level Music Technology Study Guide by Tim Hallas
https://www.amazon.co.uk/Edexcel-Level-Music-Technology-Study/dp/1785586025

Using pages 20-22 create a 10min presentation on the two main types of microphones. Your presentation must include:

- Dynamic microphones and how they work including examples of different models
- Ways to use Dynamics mics
- Condenser microphones and how they work include examples of different models
- Ways to use Condenser mics
- Polar pickup patterns; Cardioid, Figure of 8, Omindirectional, Hyper Cardioid

To be submitted under task 4 as a PowerPoint presentation

Task 5: Demonstrate Your Compositional Skills - 4hrs

Part 1
A large part of the coursework requires you to make an original composition based on a brief; 50% of it and 20% of your final grade. Whilst the skills you learn throughout the coursework will enhance your productions it is expected that you have composed and arranged original music already (much like you would be expected to have already produced artwork for A Level Art).

Your task is to create an electronic section of music lasting at least 1 minute! You can use Soundation (https://soundation.com/feed) which is a free online music creation software or your own DAW if you have one (Garageband, Logic, Reaper, FL). Please avoid using premade loops unless they are your own.

This is to be submitted via MP3 on Frog

Part 2
We would like to hear an example of your composition, one that you think is the strongest. This could be music you compose in your own time, would that you have completed for school, your band's composition, a song you have written in your bedroom and recorded on your mobile phone. It can be in any style and the production quality is not important (remember this is what you are here to learn)

If you would like to compose from home or haven't had a go at composing yet I suggest you download Soundation and follow my tutorial on how to use it unless you already have a DAW at home

This is to be submitted via MP3 on Frog

Deadlines & Submission Methods All Tasks are due to be completed by the first lesson in September and must have been submitted on FROG Any questions please email me on: joshua.hampson@fromecollege.org

Production Analysis Hints and Tips

Using the acronym CIDER we can analyse a variety of aspects of production:

Capture: This refers to any aspects of the recording and arrangement of the instruments. Have the instruments been captured using microphones to maintain a live feel or have they been inputted using midi and heavily quanitised. Does the arrangement have lots of captured parts that thicken the texture or has it been stripped back to some simple parts

Instrumentation: What instruments have been used, are they slight variations on each other or completely different. Highlight any subtle changes but also point out the obvious, if a electric bass has been substituted for a synth bass point it out. Also try and describe sounds as best you can, for example plucked lead synth, rather than just lead synth, muted electric bass rather than just bass.

Dynamics: What are the differences between louds and quiets. Does the track sound like its been heavily compressed. Are the dynamics lively or does it sound crushed.

Editing and Effects: One of the most obvious differences that you might be able to hear will be the use of effects. Listen for examples of modulation effects such as chorus, flanger and phaser, the use of distortion and the addition of ambience to the recording. The addition of reverb and delay to a vocal is a simple method for changing the feel of a recording. By creating a more ambient sound, the producer can change how a part sits within the overall mix. By creating artificial repeats of sections the producer can alter the overall structure of piece, repeat sections and create a different emphasis. If the tracks you are comparing are remixes or from an electronic genre it is possible that they will contain some DJ effects. This can include the use of filtering to remove specific frequencies either as a stand-alone effect or by routing the signal through the filter section of a synthesiser. Other DJ effects include the use of stuttering effects – when short sections of audio are played back repeatedly, often at increasing tempos – the use of scratching, and the reversing of audio. These effects are likely to have been combined with other processes to drastically alter the sound of any original material and make it sound unique to the genre and track.

One of the comparisons that need to be carried out is to identify the differences between the way the tracks have been edited. If one features short cut-up sections of audio (sampling or re-arranging a vocal line) then this needs to be compared to the production on the other track. If the track you have been provided with contains a remix, how has the producer altered the original material structurally? Have they maintained a verse/ chorus structure or have they used samples of the original material and constructed an entirely new shape for the piece of music? Processing As mentioned within the instrumentation.

Reasoning:
Suggest why the production choices have been made. Is it due to genre? Is it to create a very different feel.