Glasgow School of Art Course Specification
Course Title: Electronic Music and Sound Design

Please note that this course specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the 2025-26 Academic Year.

Course Code:	HECOS Code:	Academic Session:
		2025-26

1. Course Title:
Electronic Music and Sound Design

2. Date of Approval:	3. Lead School:	4. Other Schools:
PACAAG April 2022	School of Innovation and Technology	This course is available to students on PGT programmes which include a Stage 2 elective.

5. Credits:	6. SCQF Level:	7. Course Leader:
20	11	Paul Chapman

8. Associated Programmes:
This course is available to students on PGT programmes which include a Stage 2 elective.

9. When Taught:
Semester 2 (PGT stage 2), taught as a blended PGT elective.

10. Course Aims:
This course aims to: • Introduce student to the history, theory and practice associated with electronic music and sound design including the physics of musical sound and analog / digital synthesis. • Provide students with practical skills using industry standard software for creating electronic music, educating them in the fundamental concepts required for electronic music and sound design. The overarching aims are as follows: • Encourage interdisciplinary, critical reflexivity from within an open set of choices; • Foster deep investigative approaches to new or unfamiliar areas of practice and theory; • Cultivate self-directed leadership and initiative-taking in both applied and abstract modes of practice/ study not necessarily associated with a student's particular creative specialism;

- Enable flexible, ethical exploration and connection of diverse knowledge and understanding within a specialist programme of study.

11. Intended Learning Outcomes of Course:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Explain electronic music fundamentals and understand the historical and contextual aspects of electronic music and computer music.
2. Critically evaluate the theoretical and practical aspects and workflow involved in electronic music composition with consideration of the scope of stylistic variations.
3. Utilise appropriate dynamic and creative effects to enhance or manipulate MIDI and audio
4. Sequence MIDI data using a range of tools and techniques.
5. Produce an original piece of electronic music and describe the conceptual approach and workflows used.

12. Indicative Content:

Indicative course contents includes:
- History of electronic and computer music
- The physics of musical sound
- Vintage analogue and digital synthesisers
- Difference between Ableton Live and other DAWs

Practical Electronic Music Creation:
- Arrangement, Session and Clip Views
- Audio Clips, Tempo, and Warping
- Editing MIDI Notes and Velocities
- Converting Audio to MIDI
- Mixing, Routing and I/O
- Working with Instruments and Effects
- Instrument, Drum and Effect Racks
- Automation and Editing Envelopes
- Clip Envelopes
- Integration of Max MSP with Ableton Live (Max for Live)
- MIDI and Key Remote Control
- Demonstration of Push 2 and other interfaces
- Use of Ableton for live performance - Link, Synchronization, and ReWire
- Detail investigation into selected plugins for advanced audio processing and effects
- Understand fundamental electronic sound synthesis components. For example, low frequency oscillators, voltage control oscillators, sequencers, filters and envelopes such as ADSR.
- Mixing and mastering fundamentals including EQ and compression.

13. Description of Summative Assessment Methods:

A series of small assessments together with a short written report will together form a portfolio of work for assessment.

Assessment Method	Description of Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week (assignments)
1	Process journal	20%	Week 11, Stage 2
2	An original composition using industry standard software.	80%	Week 11, Stage 2

13.1 Please describe the Summative Assessment arrangements:

The learning outcomes 1 and 2 will be assessed through a 2000-word process journal in the areas of electronic music. [20% to be submitted in Week 12]

The Learning outcomes 2-5 will be assessed through an original composition of electronic music using industry standard software and native plugins. [80% to be submitted Week 11]

Submissions will be assessed on a combination of technical proficiency and conceptual and critical development.

14. Description of Formative Assessment Methods:

Individual feedback is available during labs to provide verbal formative assessment on a weekly basis, and a formal formative assessment midway.

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement.

14.1 Please describe the Formative Assessment arrangements:

A number of formative lab exercises provide students with an opportunity to practice with a range of electronic music concepts throughout the course, and obtain early feedback on concepts and implementation.
A formal formative assessment will take place in week 5.

15. Learning and Teaching Methods:

Formal Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours
20	200

15.1 Description of Teaching and Learning Methods:

Timetable: 10 Weekly classes – 2 hours teaching time per week. Taught wednedays or Fridays.

16. Pre-requisites:

None

17. Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	Yes
18. Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?	Yes
19. Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?	No
20. Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?	No
20.1 If yes, then please enter the names of the other teaching institutions:	
N/A	

21. Additional Relevant Information:
Electronic music is an inherently aural medium, reliant on working with visual display units. As such, this course may not be suitable for students unable to use the relevant equipment.

22. Indicative Bibliography:
DeSantis D (2015) *Making Music – 74 Creative Strategies for Electronic Music Producers,* Ableton Publishing , ISBN 978-3-9817165-0-4. Available online: https://cdn-resources.ableton.com/resources/uploads/makingmusic/MakingMusic_DennisDeSantis.pdf Holmes T (2020) *Electronic and Experimental Music – Technology, Music and Culture*, Routledge Publishing, ISBN 978-1-138-36544-5 Ableton Live Learning Resources, Online resources, [last accessed 25/6/20] https://www.ableton.com/en/live/learn-live/ Ableton (2020), *Ableton Reference Manual*, online https://www.ableton.com/en/manual/welcome-to-live/ (last accessed 28 June 2020) Sicko, D. (2010). Techno Rebels: The Renegades of Electronic Funk. Wayne State University Press. ISBN: 9780814334386 *Additional books and learning resources will be noted on the course reading list* *Relevant papers published on journal/conference proceedings will be listed on the VLE.*