

Date: 29 April 2020  
Ref: Music subject sheet

Dear Student.

Congratulations on securing a place to study music/music technology at Bournemouth and Poole College starting September 2020.

To be completely prepared and enable a smooth start to your course, please ensure you have the following 'tools' in your bag all the time, and that you complete the exercises below, ready for your first day. Thank you.

### Headphones

For monitoring audio in the studio and production suites, good quality headphones are essential.

- Pick a pair made by audio professional manufacturers like Sennheiser, AKG, Beyer Dynamic. These will likely last longer and have sound reproduction better suited to serious music study.
- Select headphones that fit over your ears (known as circumaural), not ear bud types. They will be more comfortable for extended periods of use. You will likely need a pair for music study that are separate from the pair you use for every day listening on the bus etc. Making music is not the same as listening to music.
- Go for headphones that are 'closed backed'. This reduces the amount of sound that escapes and is better suited to recording applications and quiet working areas.
- Ensure you have a 3.5mm to 1/4" adapter so the headphones can be used for different applications that have different size sockets. Many headphones are supplied with these adapters but please check.

### USB memory stick

Keeping copies (back-ups) of your data files on a USB memory stick avoids possible loss of work and wasted time.

- Select a manufacture known for reliable memory products like Corsair, Kingston, Patriot, Sandisk. This way, your data backups are more secure.
- Select a capacity suitable for music backups e.g. 32GB and up. The music files used in professional music production are anything upwards of 5 times the size as mp3 files.

### Email address

Prepare for professional level communication with a suitable email address. You should consider the following:

- **An email address that contains your real name** e.g. robert.smith@gmail.com and not the one you thought would be funny when you first created an email address for yourself e.g. bobbyonthebeatzbreakingbad46543@gmail.com
- **An email address that you actually check daily.** Set it up on your phone if you have the facility to do so (all smartphones do, of course).
- **An email address that is used for professional communication only.** Use a different email address for signing up to things like one-off services or offers. This prevents the inbox of your serious email from being filled with spam.

### Stationary

Taking notes and filing them daily is paramount to getting the most from your studies. To help, ensure you have the following:

- **A4 Lined paper that is already hole punched.** You won't always be next to a computer and making notes on paper allows you to approach things in a different manner; draw pictures and graphs, make additions and links with arrows etc. It is also excellent practice to write up handwritten notes on a computer at a later date (when you return home from college that day). This enables correction of errors, gives rise to reflection on your learning, and provides an opportunity to record any questions you have about the topics covered, that you can then ask at the next session with your lecturer.
- **Pens and pencils.** A variety of colours is useful because you will be creating diagrams that have details benefitting from the clarity separate colours can provide. E.g. a flow diagram showing different types of audio signal.
- **A4 ring binder folder.** This enables you to file the notes and resources from different topics allowing easy reference in subsequent sessions.

- **Ring binder dividers.** To separate your topic sections.

### **Calendar/Diary**

As an industry professional, it is likely you will have many appointments and deadlines to remember. Similarly, at college you will have assessment deadlines, recording sessions, rehearsals and other important dates that must not be missed. Your schedule may change and will develop over time. For this reason, if you do not already, we suggest you start using a calendar or diary. All mobile phones come with this functionality and linking the calendar from your professional email address provider, will further help your communication and planning. If you don't know how to do this, just search on the internet for 'linking my *Gmail/Outlook/etc* email calendar to my phone calendar app'.

### **Exercises**

Please complete the following exercises before starting and have them ready to share on your first day.

1. Write a short essay on what it means to be professional (500 words maximum). Your work should be your own and contain a definition and examples of professional behaviour to help contextualise your definition.
2. Please use some free software to create a piece of music that can be shared on your first day. You could use a simple audio recorder to record a performance or something that enables a little more production, like a mobile audio workstation app. You will be able to plug your phone into a speaker system or you can bring the audio file on your USB drive if that suits you. If you have an iPhone, please ensure that you have the iPhone to 3.5mm adapter or that you provide your recording on a different format. Test this before the day you need it.

Thank you for preparing for your studies in a professional manner. We look forward to seeing you at enrolment.

Kind regards and best wishes

The Music Team.