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University of the Highlands and Islands/ Perth College

Module: Recording and Mixing

Assignment: LO2 pt1

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<i>Please fill in all the boxes</i>	<i>Completed</i>
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Module number	UPEJ01A34
Title of assignment	LO2 pt1
Date	01/05/15
First submission or resubmission	First

Please complete the checklist below to make sure you have completed all aspects of the assignment before you submit it for marking. Have you:

Have you:

Completed the assignment task?	X
Met the criteria?	X
Checked and proof-read your assignment?	X
Filled in the required details on the front cover (above)?	X
Included page numbers and your name on every page?	X
Included a word count?	X
Included a statement that it is your own work?	X
Included a correctly cited list of references?	N/A
Included all the appendices that you may mention?	N/A
All sections of the assignment contained in one Word document file for submission via Turnitin?	X

Declaration: This assignment is a product of my own work.

Signed: Harrison Maloney

Sound Production: Recording and Mixing

Learning Outcome 2, Part 1.

Outcome 2, Part 1 – Assessment Brief

1,000-word essay (+/- 10%).

Outcome 2 — Mix-down a multi-track recording to an agreed client brief.

Product evidence:

- Evaluate a multi-track recording to produce a mix-down plan.

This essay is divided into two halves (please see template below) – 500 words to evaluate the quality of your recording and 500 words to create a plan for your mix.

Consider the follow:

Evaluation:

- How well have the source sounds captured?
- Did you make good decisions regarding microphone choice, placement and/or recording techniques?
- How successfully did you create isolation between instruments/performers during the sessions?
- How were your communications skills with the artist? (Directing them, encouraging them, suggesting ideas, giving feedback, etc.).
- How well did you manage your time?
- What were the successes of the sessions?
- What are your strengths as an engineer?
- What were the limitations of the session?
- If you were to go back and attempt these sessions again, what would you do differently?

Mix Plan:

- How you plan to balance the mix – what will be in the forefront (louder), what will be in the background (quieter)?
- How do you plan on using the stereo image (i.e., where shall things be panned)?
- What dynamic processes do you plan on using?
- What effects do you plan on using?
- Do you have any reference tracks to work with?

Sound Production: Recording and Mixing

Learning Outcome 2 Part 1

Evaluate your multi-track recording: (500 words)

The session ended up being a bit of a mess due to the musicians not having a solid plan for the structure of the song and issues playing to a click which led to us missing some important things in the engineering side due to miscommunication between us all. Overall, most of the sounds were captured in good detail and at a loud enough level – around 10dB; however, the 3 tom mics were not gain staged properly and as they were dynamic MD421s, the level is completely unusable. The overhead mics which were RB100 ribbons were not gain staged properly but were at a level that could have been rescued. Then at some point during the sessions they audio cut out one of them, but we didn't notice. So 5 of our drum mic recordings are unusable. The mic choices were standard for each instrument as well as using the standard techniques with regards to placement. The initial plan was to first record drums and bass at the same time with the bass cab being isolated in another room and then record the electric guitar after, however due to running out of time in the session the band decided to go without a click track and record the electric guitar at the same time. This caused a small amount of bleed but nothing out of the ordinary for a live session. More electric guitar and then acoustic guitar were overdubbed separately after. The communication with the artists was good and we got a headphone mix they were happy with, most of the issues stemmed from us being distracted by trying to get a solid song structure which led to many people jumping on and off the desk. This is also what caused the issues with time management as the band's issues playing wasted hours of the session, but from the engineering side everything was completed in an acceptable timeframe. In the end we managed to get all the recordings we need within the session so despite some mics not being usable it was a success overall. As an engineer I feel I have a strong understanding of using the desk and of the 2 separate stages of signal flow as well as having built a strong knowledge of different microphones and their best applications. I also have a strong understanding of using a patch bay and outboard gear. The main limitation of the session was the performance of the band. The song was unrehearsed and the band was not a proper band, it was one made up of audio students for this module. This caused a lot of stress and tension in the session as it was the only session for weeks and it looked as if we may not record everything we needed. If I were to do the session again, I would ensure the band know what they are playing and be ready to do so before the session. I would also take a lead role on the engineering side on the desk to make sure everything is gain staged and recording properly as having people swapping in and out caused us to miss the microphone issues. This would mean

the session is less cluttered and would overall flow much better, leading to both an enjoyable session and a truly productive one like others I have had.

Sound Production: Recording and Mixing Learning Outcome 2, Part 1.

Looking forward, plan you mix (500 words)

For the mix I plan to have the guitars panned wide around the mix with the lead guitar playing down the centre. Because of the issues with overhead and tom mics I have decided to keep the drums mono down the centre with the bass. The Juno 6 is a stereo synth so it will be panned left and right, however I don't plan on panning it fully to the outer edge. I want the lead riff guitar and Juno 6 to act in place as a vocal as there isn't one, so they need to stand out in the mix. Overall, I am planning to make the track feel sort of muted and degraded like it is on an old cassette. I want the same sort of vibe as song from people like Phoebe Bridgers, Mac Demarco and Men I trust. Not only do I feel this sort of mix would fit the song well, it would also help to mask the mistakes made by the band and make it feel more intentional. I plan to use an LA-2A compressor on the guitars, with the drums I plan to use a Distressor on the kick to try and add a bit more punch and then an SSL compressor on the drum bus to glue it together. I also plan to use EQ like the SSL channel strip and Pultec to darken the guitars a bit and to cut highs and lows to add the old tape feel. For the bass I would like to try R Bass from Waves as I see lots of positive things about it and I will use EQ to blend the mic and DI recordings. For the Juno all I plan to do is cut of the lows to leave space for other elements and cut the highs, again for the worn-out feel. The guitars will all be sent to a reverb bus to make them feel sort of dreamy, however the synth won't need to be as the built in Juno chorus has a dreamy feel already. The only reverb I plan to use is Valhalla Vintage Verb as it is so versatile. I also plan on using the plugins RC-20 Retro Color and Lossy, these will both be used to 'degrade' the sound with RC-20 being used to add wobble and distortion and Lossy being used to add artifacts. Lossy also has a built-in filter to further create a dreamy feel. I plan to use tracks from the artists mentioned earlier, however for reference tracks I will use the album 'Punisher' from Phoebe bridgers for the guitars. For the drums I plan to mix like most Mac Demarco songs with a quiet feel but snappy snare.

Word count = 1012