ONLINE MASTER’S DEGREES IN PROFESSIONAL MUSIC AND AUDIO STUDIES

THINKSPACE EDUCATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER
ThinkSpace Education, in partnership with the University of Chichester, is the only institution in the world offering online master’s degrees in composition for film, TV and games, orchestration for films, TV and games, and sound design for video games.

Working composers live in a time of seismic and rapid change. That change presents challenges for many, but also opportunities for a few.

When you join our professional postgraduate program, you will be among the few; those who are equipped to seize the opportunities thrown up by this brave new world.

A master’s degree from the University of Chichester is a prestigious qualification and a major personal and creative achievement. It is a validation of your ability as a composer and an internationally recognized qualification that establishes both your status and your technical and creative ability.

Anyone hoping to enter the professional industry for the first time, or to uplift their career trajectory, needs careful guidance from people with knowledge of crucial industry developments, often completely invisible to those on the outside.

Every one of our tutors works in the industry, many at the cutting edge of innovation, working on major international productions in film, games and television. In this creative and supportive environment, you have a unique opportunity to develop your own musical voice, a distinctive sound that can be the key to unlocking your full potential.

OUR MISSION

➤ To provide an exceptional professional education in the fields of film, television and video games music composition, orchestration and sound design.

➤ To make academic contributions that will enable greater understanding and appreciation of the role that music and sound plays in the film, games and television.

➤ To develop new ways of delivering exceptional higher education in an online environment.

➤ To use the experience and insights of experienced professional practitioners to inform new generations of composers, orchestrators and sound designers.
As a ThinkSpace student, we are here to support you every step of the way.

With over 20 years of experience providing online and distance learning, your future is safe in our hands.

WHY ONLINE STUDY WORKS

Online has huge advantages both in terms of the quality and relevance of your education and also financially.

> Keep working. No relocating. No leaving friends and family.

> Realistic model for the working life of a freelance composer.

> Schedule your study to fit in with all aspects of your life.

Not having to relocate represents a substantial monetary saving compared with traditional residential courses. When you add to that our competitive fee structure, this is both world-class education and unbeatable value.

Working from home, with your own gear in your own studio, is a perfect model of what life will be like as a professional working composer.

Day-to-day distractions at home can be difficult, but those are the same challenges you will face as a working composer and that’s something no residential course can prepare you for.

> Jeton Murtishi
Chicago USA
Masters student in Professional Media Composition

“The Masters Degree program at Thinkspace Education has provided me with the essential tools necessary to compose music for film, television, and other multimedia. A talented staff of highly experienced tutors will guide you through this learning journey. I highly recommend this degree program to all aspiring composers.”

Master’s students from the USA, Australia, Spain and Finland join together on one of our regular online tutorial groups.
HOW MUCH TIME WILL IT TAKE?

A postgraduate degree is a major commitment but with our flexible schedules, many of our students combine their study with busy working and family lives. A full time schedule will take roughly three days a week. Part time can take one or two days a week depending on the schedule you choose. Remember that the time taken to study for a degree is no different than the time you will need to dedicate to your career when you graduate. If you struggle to find the time to study, you need to ask yourself if you would have the time to launch a career.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

With our interest free credit scheme, you can gain a master's degree from as little as $100 a week. Prices vary depending on the course and schedule chosen, and full details can be found at the end of this document.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

We pride ourselves on the quality of our course materials and our staff.

> Our tutors are all working professionals, many at the highest level in the industry.

> Our curriculum has been carefully designed to replicate real-world scenarios and work opportunities. In fact, many of the projects were once real briefs.

> The quality of our teaching materials and the personal support you will receive throughout your course are first class.

VIDEO LECTURERS

Our video lecturers come from the very top of the profession and we are enormously grateful to them for offering up their unique advice and insight to the next generation of composers. To name just a few...

Harry Gregson-Williams
Chronicles of Narnia, Shrek, Total Recall

David Arnold
Quantum of Solace, Stargate, Sherlock

Nicholas Hooper
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

Richard Jacques
Games including James Bond 007, Mass Effect, Sonic The Hedgehog, The Muppets

... Michael Nyman, George Fenton, Debbie Wiseman and many more.
The world of music and audio for media is incredibly competitive. We know that because we are actively working in it. Everyone you come across through ThinkSpace is working right now inside the industry that you want to enter. From Composers, to Orchestrators and Sound Designers, you will always be speaking to exactly the right people.

THE THINKSPACE ETHOS

Everything we do is designed from the ground up to get you working on the jobs you want to do.

We believe this is the only way to get the correct information to our students. The business moves so fast that only these people are able to give advice that could change your career trajectory. It’s also why our courses run all year round, replicating the working life you will be expected to compete in once you graduate. Working from home on your own gear, learning to troubleshoot and building a network of fellow composers and sound designers to talk to and that support each other.

A course that combines advanced training in scoring and orchestration for film, games and other media with a focus on both live and sampled orchestration. Course highlights include a live session with a 50-piece professional film orchestra, recording sessions throughout the course with live musicians, and a choice of inspiring real-world projects from film, television, games, animation and commercials. You will acquire industry-ready professional skills, both creative and technical.

You will complete at least twenty projects including the dissertation; an extended piece of work from a wide choice of inspiring projects. This is a unique opportunity to create a substantial, industry-focused piece for your demo reel.

This course combines the elements of both the Professional Media Composition and Orchestration for Film Games and Television master’s degree programs.

See inside this course
OVERVIEW >
MA PROFESSIONAL MEDIA COMPOSITION

Duration:
1 year full time
2 – 3 years part time

Award:
Master of Arts (MA)
University of Chichester

The aim of this course is to prepare composers to work in the industry. You will gain first hand experience of a wide variety of work environments, including film, games, animation, documentary, commercials, library music and many more. Essential skills like writing to a brief, spotting, dealing with notes and scoring to picture are all covered in detail. The final dissertation is to score 30 minutes of music for an extended project chosen from a selection of feature films and other source material.

See inside this course

Jeff MacDonald
Visiting Lecturer

Jeff runs one of the most successful trailer production companies in Hollywood, Louder Productions. His list of credits is astonishing and illustrates the level of insight and production values he brings to every project he works on. Jeff has been working with ThinkSpace for over ten years and, coincidentally, his right-hand man is one of our graduates.

OVERVIEW >
MA ORCHESTRATION FOR FILM, GAMES AND TELEVISION

Duration:
1 year full time
2 – 3 years part time

Award:
Master of Arts (MA),
University of Chichester

The aim of this course is to provide you with the skills to write and orchestrate at the highest level, for both live and sampled orchestras. The course teaches a unique combination of musical and technical skill sets, combining a thorough grounding in traditional orchestration with cutting edge techniques employed in scoring blockbuster films and AAA games. You will have your work performed by solo musicians throughout the course, which culminates in a recording session with a 50-piece professional film orchestra.

See inside this course

Bill Boston
Course Tutor

Tutor Bill Boston is a composer and orchestrator. He has worked on Oscar nominated scores like 3:10 to Yuma, and Hollywood blockbusters such as Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, Live Free or Die Hard, The Day After Tomorrow and I, Robot. Bill’s feedback and mentoring has helped dozens of students to succeed. It is through the generosity of industry leading figures like Bill that ThinkSpace courses offer such a unique opportunity to aspiring composers and orchestrators worldwide.
Composing for Video Games brings together the technical and creative skills you need to begin your career in game music composition. You will work with industry standard tools in projects replicating the real working environments of composers today. Learning to master integral skills in video game composition, such as branching and vertical re-orchestration, with tutorials from composers working in the industry right now! You will develop your skills to create complex adaptive scores that you will see working in games. Learning the process behind the technology and implementing your own music into game engines like Unity.

Erik Desiderio
Lecturer and Tutor
Working across the video game industry as a composer, Erik’s credits include Adventure Time: Magic Man’s Head Games, more than 40 indie games, as well as the upcoming console game, Reborn. Erik has worked on full orchestra productions at Warner Bros Studios in LA.

See inside this course

Working with industry standard technologies and techniques, students on Sound Design for Video Games will be equipped with the vital skills to work on exciting Game projects. Learning to create dynamic and interactive audio that is both stylised and realistic you will receive feedback from tutors working on some of the biggest games being made right now. Tackling the same challenges they do on a daily basis, students will work on projects replicating the real working world. Discussing issues such as memory budgets, voice count, version control, and much much more.

Frank Petreikis
Visiting Lecturer
Frank is Audio Lead at Crystal Dynamics with over 10 years experience in the AAA industry. With credits such as Rise of the Tomb Raider, Dragon Age Inquisition, the Mass Effect Franchise and several THQ published titles, he has an excellent ear for narrative audio.

See inside this course
For those who are able to join us, this is a great opportunity to meet the team and to get to know your fellow students.

We will be conducting a series of seminars and workshops to show you all about scoring for media. In these sessions we will be listening to your music and giving constructive criticism. The events take place in Chichester, in the South of England, and are broadcast live in our virtual Lecture Theatre.

This event is also a chance to visit our partners at the University of Chichester where you will be returning for the degree ceremony to collect your MA. We appreciate not all students can travel to be with us so this induction week is optional.

Master’s students in Los Angeles talk with top Hollywood composer’s agent, Jeff Kaufman.

OverView

MFA Game Music and Audio

Duration:
2 years full time
3 – 4 years part time

Award:
Master of Fine Art (MFA)
University of Chichester

Combining both the disciplines of composition and sound design, Game Music and Audio MFA encompasses the whole audio process in video game production. Students will engage with a range of projects, creating audio and music from scratch and implementing the work themselves in industry standard technologies, such as middleware and commercial game engines. Receiving briefs from Audio directors and developers, you will be taking the entire process of audio development and delivering finished products from cut-scenes to levels and even full games. Building up a progression of techniques, you will be generating a portfolio of work that you will be able to show to prospective employers and clients.

This course is a combination of both Composing for Video Games and Sound Design for Video Games

See inside this course

Prof Stephen Baysted
Visiting Lecturer and University Liaison Officer

Stephen has worked at the heart of game audio as an Audio Director on some of the biggest ever racing titles such as Project Cars and Need for Speed. He’s tackled recording F1 cars and Red Bull race planes as well as recording full orchestras at the best studios in London. His CV also boasts several nominations for GANG awards and Hollywood Film Award winner.

Induction Events

(Optional)
COURSE CONTENT IN DETAIL: MODULES

MFA PROFESSIONAL COMPOSITION AND ORCHESTRATION

Module 1 > Writing in Styles
The first step in the journey to becoming a working composer is to master a range of styles most commonly requested by clients. First, watch a series of tutorials with course director Guy Michelmore composing pieces in real time. You will then be asked to research each of these styles, find interesting examples and draw conclusions about the fundamental elements of the style in question. After you will watch as Guy creates more music using the course default libraries, which you all could, and should, own.

Module 2 > History of Film Music
This module runs alongside the scoring modules and adds perspective to the more practical work you will be doing in other areas of the course. It helps you to place music for multimedia in context, to study how the score interacts with the moving image and trace its development through early cinematic history up to the present day. It is a critical survey of the development of the film score rather than a musicological history. You will, for example, be asked to contrast John Barry’s James Bond score for “From Russia with Love” (1963) with Thomas Newman’s approach to “Skyfall” (2012).

You will be watching films, considering their place in cultural and social history, asking questions of the role of the music and its relationship to the film and questioning how the approach to the film score has changed over time.

Module 3 > Writing to a Brief
Having gained confidence in writing outside your preferred style, we start exploring the complexities of interpreting a client’s requirements and how best to respond musically to a brief. We investigate areas such as: corporate video, TV themes, games, factual television and library music. Every time you approach a different area of the business, you will hear from both composers and the producers who commission them, so you see the business from both sides of the fence. Your project work gives you the opportunity to build an ongoing dialogue with your tutors, take part in workshops, webinars and forum discussions to help you develop critical skills and enhance your understanding of the medium.

Module 4 > Writing to Picture
Here we tackle the technical aspects of scoring to picture, from timecodes to hit-points, two-pops to stems. You will discover the latest technical solutions to the challenge of combining music with the moving image. You will also learn about documentary, animation, commercials and natural history, a broad range of areas of the industry, any one of which could be a career in the making.

Module 5 > Scoring Drama
For many composers, drama is the most rewarding and demanding area of work. Understanding the intentions of the director and the interplay of script, performance and score, help make this a significant challenge. With the guidance of top composers, including Harry Gregson-Williams, David Arnold, Michael Nyman, Nick Hooper and many more, we look at the way composers approach film scoring.

Module 6 > Elective
Choose from a range of challenging technical and creative subjects, including Kontakt Programming, Pro Tools, Advanced Sibelius, Music Editing and Sampling Technology. You choose one elective here, and a second from the same options the following year.

> Gari Biasillo
Kyoto, Japan
Masters student in Professional Media Composition

The course has provided me with a wealth of information and insight. It’s both challenging and inspiring, taking me in new directions that would be far more difficult to achieve alone without the guidance from the talented and helpful staff at ThinkSpace.
Module 7 > Strings and Woodwind
This module looks at orchestration for strings and then woodwinds. Our video master classes feature professional musicians who have performed on films such as: Iron Man, Batman Begins, Bourne Ultimatum, How to Train Your Dragon and Chronicles of Narnia.

You can follow film orchestrator Nick Raine (Star Wars: Clone Wars, Wallace and Gromit, The Book Thief) from his first sketch in Sibelius through to the final live recording. You will look at the string section in detail in our featured scores: John William’s Star Wars and Howard Blake’s The Snowman.

In the real world, it is unlikely that a composer will get the chance to record with a live orchestra unless they can first convince the people with the budget to let them do it. That is why creating great sampled mock-ups is so important. We look at a selection of string and woodwind sample libraries and effective techniques for making your demos sound more realistic.

You will hear your music performed by live professional instrumentalists who will give feedback on the suitability of the writing.

Module 8 > Session Preparation
Here we look at the technical skills you may require to prepare your scores for live performance. You will learn how to create a conductor’s score, tips on how to make your parts easier to read, tying up the Pro Tools session with your scores and making sure that everything on the day goes as smoothly as possible. You will learn from musicians, orchestrators and producers working in the highest level of the music business. For example, how studios like Hans Zimmer’s Remote Control prepare their Pro Tools sessions for recording and how this workflow will allow you realise your digital compositions for a live recording session.

Module 9 > Orchestration Brass, Harp and Percussion
Rounding off our tour of the orchestra, we look in detail at the brass, percussion and harp. Musicians with credits including The Dark Knight, The Golden Compass, Fantastic Mr. Fox and many more, give you a master class in how to score for their instrument. Again, we follow orchestrator Nick Raine as he orchestrates material from a variety of media and then takes the score to a live recording with a 50-piece film orchestra. As a bonus, top arranger Steve Sidwell (The Voice, The Olympics Opening Ceremony, Moulin Rouge, The Oscars) gives you an insight into scoring for swing band.

Again, we look in detail at how to bring sampled mock-ups to life with a focus on brass, harp and percussion.

Module 10 > Scoring for Full Orchestra
Having looked at each section of the orchestra individually, we bring it all together in this module examining scoring techniques for both large and small ensembles. Our featured scores Star Wars, for large orchestra, and The Snowman, for small ensemble, feature strongly in this module. The Snowman composer Howard Blake gives you a personal master class in the orchestration of this timeless classic.

As before, there are extensive video tutorials guiding you through the initial orchestration process through to the live performance. Above all, this is a great opportunity to practice working with different forms of source material: from MIDI files and MP3 demos, to piano reductions and short score.

Module 11 > Orchestration in Practice
Complex skills, such as film orchestration, need time and a lot of one-to-one tuition to manifest. This module gives you three more projects to work on, drawn from a vast choice of real-life professional source material so that you can obtain the skills that you will need to complete the final project.

Module 12> Major Project
You can choose between an original composition of your own or to orchestrate from the source material of another composer. You will orchestrate a minimum of fifteen minutes of music, ready to record with a live orchestra. You will plan and budget your session and produce all the conductor’s scores and parts. You will be responsible for building the Pro Tools sessions as well, including pre-records, creating click tracks and everything that they will require on the day. You will be graded on your scores, sampled mock-ups and pro tools sessions. Once graded we will work with you to ensure your scores and session elements are of a suitable standard.

> Live Orchestral Session
Finally, you will have the opportunity to join us in the studio to hear your music performed by a live 50-piece professional film orchestra. It is an unforgettable experience not to be missed. Your course fee includes all musicians, studio time and recording costs. You only pay for your own travel and accommodation. Locations and dates are subject to confirmation.
Module 1 > Writing in Styles
The first step in the journey to becoming a working composer is to master a range of styles most commonly requested by clients. First, watch a series of tutorials with course director Guy Michelmore composing pieces in real time. You will be asked to research each of these styles, find interesting examples and draw conclusions about the fundamental elements of the style in question. You will then observe as Guy creates more music using the course default libraries, which you all could, and should, own.

The task provides you with a series of projects and exercises where you must first recreate a piece written by Guy and then continue that piece in the same style. It is an intensive but effective process that we use in-house to train our assistants.

Module 2 > Writing to a Brief
Having gained confidence in writing outside of your preferred style, we start exploring the complexities of interpreting a client’s requirements and how best to respond musically to a brief. We investigate areas such as corporate video, TV themes and idents. Every time you approach a different area of the business, you will hear from both composers and the producers who commission them, so as you see the business from both sides of the fence.

Module 3 > Writing to a Brief 2
Building on the previous, module, we expand our investigation to cover a wider area of work; this includes an introduction to games, factual television and library music. You will discuss the importance of originality and finding your own voice with us and other students. The wider range of subject areas is supported by contributions from composers and producers working in those fields. Your project work gives you the opportunity to build an ongoing dialogue with your tutors, take part in workshops, webinars and forum discussions to help you develop critical skills and enhance your understanding of the medium.

Module 4 > Film Music in Practice: The Origins of Film Scoring
This module runs alongside the scoring modules and adds perspective to the more practical work you will be doing in other areas of the course. It helps you to place music for multimedia in context, to study how the score interacts with the moving image and trace its development through early cinematic history up to the present day. It is a critical survey of the development of the film score rather than a musicological history. You will, for example, be asked to contrast John Barry’s James Bond score for “From Russia with Love” (1963) with Thomas Newman’s approach to “Skyfall” (2012).

You will be watching films, considering their place in cultural and social history, asking questions of the role of the music and its relationship to the film and questioning how the approach to the film score has changed over time.

Module 4 > Music Editing
This is an essential skill and one we teach to all our new composing assistants. Your guide to feature film music editing is Tony Lewis (Skyfall, Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, Cabin in the Woods, The Hours, Mama Mia) and for television editing Mark Ryan. Editing music to picture is a great way to understand the process of combining music with the moving image. The advantage of this unit is that you can explore how music can affect emotional aesthetic and enhance the narrative without the additional complication of composing the music as well. We provide you with a selection of projects and the music libraries to support them and show you how you can employ music editing to improve your own productivity.
Module 6 > An Introduction to Writing to Picture
Here we tackle the technical aspects of scoring to picture, from timecodes to hit-points, two-pops to stems. You will discover the latest technical solutions to the challenge of combining music with the moving image. You will also learn about documentary, animation, commercials and natural history, a broad range of areas of the industry, any one of which could be a career in the making.

Module 7 > Writing to Picture: Drama
For many composers, drama is the most rewarding and demanding area of work. Understanding the intentions of the director and the interplay of script, performance and score, help make this a significant challenge. With the guidance of top composers, including Harry Gregson-Williams, David Arnold, Michael Nyman, Nick Hooper and many more, we look at the way composers approach film scoring.

Module 8 > Film Music in Practice: The Modern Era
Film scores from 1970 onwards form the basis of this module which examines in detail great films, great composers and their constantly evolving approach to the medium. We look at the work of key figures like John Williams and Hans Zimmer, plus the seminal and challenging works which have changed the industry.

> Major Project
This is an opportunity to produce a substantial piece of work. You can choose from a range of theatrically released full-length feature films, documentary series and other source materials rarely available for you to score. Your challenge is to score 30 minutes of music against a realistic deadline. You will have the help and support of your tutors who will provide you with feedback on your background research, choice of approach, and early sample mock-ups.

Why don’t we just focus on filming scoring?
Because we want you to make a living.

Only a minority of composers exclusively score feature films. Careers are built on many other areas of the media, which are commonly neglected in traditional composition courses. If you wish to have a successful, commercial career, then you need to understand how these industry sectors operate and the thought processes of the professionals who work there. That is why we include hours of interviews with real-world clients who explain exactly what they expect of their composers.
Why is Sampled Orchestration Important?

Nobody gets to stand in front of a live orchestra unless they can first produce top quality sampled mock-ups. You have to get the gig, and then convince the people who sign the cheques that your music is worth it. So being a master of sampling technology is no longer remotely optional. It is essential and that is why it is right at the heart of our course. We even teach you to create your own sample programmes.

Module 1 > Strings

This module looks at orchestrating for strings and how film orchestration utilizes techniques rarely explored in orchestral concert music. What makes ostinatos popular in contemporary action music, or melodic string writing evoke an emotional response, these are explained by some of the world’s best film orchestrators. Our video master classes feature professional musicians who have performed on films such as: Iron Man, Batman Begins, Bourne Ultimatum, How to Train Your Dragon and Chronicles of Narnia.

You will look at the string section in detail in our featured scores: John William’s Star Wars and Howard Blake’s The Snowman.

In the real world, it is unlikely that a composer will get the chance to record with a live orchestra unless they can first convince the people with the budget to let them do it. That is why creating great sampled mock-ups is so important. We look at a selection of string sample libraries and effective techniques for making your demos sound more realistic.

You can follow film orchestrator Nick Raine (Star Wars: Clone Wars, Wallace and Gromit, The Book Thief) from his first sketch in Sibelius through to the final live recording.

Module 2 > Woodwind

A wonderfully evocative section of the orchestra often overlooked in film writing, but filled with unique technical challenges. Again we will look at how woodwind is used in our featured scores, follow master classes with top session musicians, composers and orchestrators. As with the string module, we will be showing you in detail how to effectively employ both live and sampled woodwind ensembles.

Module 3 > Sample Technology

Technology is progressing exponentially and the key to producing great digital music is understanding how contemporary software really works. This module is dedicated to improving your knowledge of key concepts such as MIDI controllers, software samplers, audio hardware and slaves. This is a comprehensive examination of modern digital audio techniques and the technology involved in creating sampled music.
Module 4 > Elective
Choose from Advanced Sibelius, Pro Tools Basics or Kontakt Programming. Advanced Sibelius takes users of this industry standard score editing software to the level needed to produce professional quality scores and parts.

Pro Tools Basics is a chance to learn this industry standard digital audio workstation. This is a vital program for the modern orchestrator to operate competently, therefore it is highly recommended that those with no prior experience of Pro Tools take this module.

Finally Kontakt Programming will teach you how to develop patches for Native Instrument's virtual sampler. This is a short course in programming your own sample programs, editing raw recordings, producing multi-velocity layers, round-robins and an introduction to basic scripting.

Whichever option you choose, all the learning materials and video tutorials from the other topics are available exclusively to all master's students.

Module 5 > Orchestration Brass, Harp and Percussion
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Module 6 > Scoring for Full Orchestra
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Module 7 > Orchestration in Practice
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Module 8 > Session Preparation
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> Live Orchestral Session
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Module 1 > Foundations of Game Music and Audio
Opening the doors into the world of game music and audio, this module tackles the main challenges games present as a unique medium. You will receive tutorials and interviews with working composers and sound designers discussing their thoughts on the issues that games create for audio and music practitioners. Students will work on a collection of projects that highlight topics such as loops, simple effects and take an in depth look into the specific area of mobile games.

Tasks are centered around laying the foundational knowledge required to progress in the course, teaching the basic skills in looping and creating themed music/audio.

Module 2 > Game Audio Technology
Game Audio technology introduces students to the vital technical skills required to create game audio. Working with industry standards software such as Middleware and commercial game engines, students will be equipped with the essential tools of the trade and receive a peek behind the curtain at how game audio truly functions.

Students will cover a variety of topics including middleware technologies, game engines, version control, memory budgets and voice count.

Module 3 > Sound, Music and the Moving Image
Students will learn to style their work and write to a brief using cut-scenes and trailers from the real game projects. Working from the same briefs that the real audio directors and composers used, students will learn key skills in writing for trailers and cut-scenes. With content from hugely successful trailer composers such as Konstantine Pope, students will learn to spot music to picture as well as other key skills such as music editing.

Module 4 > Research
This module runs alongside the scoring modules and adds perspective to the more practical work you will be doing in other areas of the course. It helps you to place music for video games in context, to study how the score interacts with the moving image and trace its development through history up to the present day. It is a critical survey of the development of game music rather than a musicological history.

You will be playing games, considering their place in cultural and social history, asking questions of the role of the music and its relationship to the game and questioning how the approach to game music has changed over time.

Module 5 > Adaptive Music 1
Combining the skills learnt in the first semester, students will begin to tackle the issue of adaptive music in video games, learning how techniques such as dynamic layers and randomised loops work in both the technical and creative aspects, and integrating their own music into game projects using technology learnt in Module 2.

Module 6 > Adaptive Music 2
Building on their current technical and creative knowledge, students will explore the possibilities in writing in ‘branching’ in a professional environment. Taking another in-depth look at game music challenges such as memory budgets, students will engage with the specific problems composers face in the process of video game development.

ThinkSpace is a key sponsor of the Ludomusicology research group, and students will receive access to video recordings of paper presentations from the 2016 conference as well as the next round of conferences when they are available.

Module 7 > Advanced Game Music 1
Now looking at the world of AAA game development, students will be shown the specific needs of AAA clients including working with agents, using orchestrators, orchestral recording sessions and modern development cycles.

Students also have the opportunity to explore the creative process in creating modern AAA hybrid game compositions whilst still writing to a brief.

Module 8 > Elective
As a ThinkSpace student, you will have the opportunity to choose an area of study as part of the ‘Elective’ module(s). ThinkSpace is looking to add more and more options for students and more choices maybe available at your time of study. We currently offer choices of ‘Cinematic Sound Design’, ‘Professional Development’ and ‘Advanced Game Music 2’.

Module 9 > Major Project
At the end of the year students will embark on a ‘Major Project’. Choosing from a selection of assignments, the Major Project represents a substantial amount of work, similar to a professional project. The project will combine skills and techniques acquired throughout the course and will be completed under a set amount of time (12 weeks).
Module 1 > Foundations of Game Music and Audio
Opening the doors into the world of game music and audio, this module tackles the main challenges games present as a unique medium. You will receive tutorials and interviews with working composers and sound designers discussing their thoughts on the issues that games create for audio and music practitioners. Students will work on a collection of projects that highlight topics such as loops, simple effects and take an in depth look into the specific area of mobile games.

Tasks are centered around laying the foundational knowledge required to progress in the course, teaching the basic skills in looping and creating themed music/audio.

Module 2 > Game Audio Technology
Game Audio technology introduces students to the vital technical skills required to create game audio. Working with industry standards software such as Middleware and commercial game engines, students will be equipped with the essential tools of the trade and receive a peek behind the curtain to see how game audio truly functions.

Students will cover a variety of topics including middleware technologies, game engines, version control, memory budgets and voice count.

Module 3 > Sound, Music and the Moving Image
Students will learn to style their work and write to a brief using cut-scenes and trailers from the real game projects. Working from the same briefs that the real audio directors and composers used, students will learn key skills in writing for trailers and cut-scenes. With content from hugely successful trailer Sound Designers such as Konstantine Pope, students will learn key skills such as music editing.

Module 4 > Research
This module runs alongside the scoring modules and adds perspective to the more practical work you will be doing in other areas of the course. It helps you to place audio for video games in context, to study how the score interacts with the moving image and trace its development through history up to the present day. It is a critical survey of the development of game music rather than a musicological history.

You will be playing games, considering their place in cultural and social history, asking questions of the role of the audio and its relationship to the game and questioning how the approach to game audio has changed over time. ThinkSpace is a key sponsor of the Ludomusicology research group, and students will receive access to video recordings of paper presentations from the 2016 conference as well as the next round of conferences when they are available.

Module 5 > Interactive Audio 1
Combining the skills learnt in the first semester, students will begin to tackle the issue of interactive audio in video games, learning how challenges such as Foley and vehicles function inside game environments, and integrating their audio into game projects using technology learnt in Module 2. Students will also learn Audio QA methodologies and the process of audio testing.

Module 6 > 3D Audio Environments
Building on their current technical and creative knowledge, students will explore the opportunities and challenges 3D audio environments present. Taking another in-depth look at game music challenges such as memory budgets and voice count, students will engage with the specific problems Sound Designers face in the process of video game development.

Module 7 > Advanced Game Audio 1
Working on in-depth and detailed topics such as dialogue editing and game mixing, students will bring their abilities to project focused work. Areas taught by professional Dialogue Editors such as Gina Zdanowicz (Dialogue Editor; Bioshock 2 and The Bureau: XCOM Declassified). Students will also engage in the new challenges of mixing game audio.

Module 8 > Elective
As a ThinkSpace student, you will have the opportunity to choose an area of study as part of the ‘Elective’ module(s). ThinkSpace is looking to add more and more options for students and more choices maybe available at your time of study. We currently offer choices of ‘Cinematic Sound Design’, ‘Professional Development’ and ‘Advanced Game Music 2’.

Module 9 > Major Project
At the end of the year students will embark on a ‘Major Project’. Choosing from a selection of assignments, the Major Project represents a substantial amount of work, similar to a professional project. The project will combine skills and techniques acquired throughout the course and will be completed under a set amount of time (12 weeks).
MODULES >
MFA GAME MUSIC AND AUDIO

Module 1 > Foundations of Game Music and Audio

Module 2 > Game Audio Technology

Module 3 > Sound music and the moving image

Module 4 > Research

Module 5 > Adaptive Music 1

Module 6 > Interactive Audio 1

Module 7 > Adaptive Music 2

Module 8 > 3D audio environments

Module 9 > Advanced Game Music 1

Module 10 > Advanced Game Audio 1

Module 11 > Elective

Module 12 > Major Project.

(For individual module descriptions, please see the Composing for Video Games and Sound Design for Video Games course pages)

Game Courses additional requirements;
In addition to the requirements of the other post graduate courses, applicants wishing to study on the Game course pathways must also have;

Computer Spec:
A GPU 1 GB (Recommend 2 GB)

MFA Game Music and Audio and Sound Design for Video Games also require;

A field recorder (Zoom H4n Recommended)

Two outboard microphones (1 shotgun and one other polaroid microphone recommended)

A small collection of Foley and SFX sound libraries (please state on your application what libraries you own) we recommend checking http://www.sonniss.com/ and their free GDC giveaways.

Sound Design for video game students special note;

Sound Design for video game students do NOT require the musical libraries such as East West Quantum Leap or Vienna Symphonic Library. MFA Game music and Audio students DO require these libraries.
Career Development Loans
UK students are eligible to receive a loan of up to £10,000, which is interest free for two years.

Scholarships
We offer scholarships on merit. They are available to students who can demonstrate exceptional ability and potential. We are keen to ensure that the best students can benefit from our courses, so if finances are the only thing preventing you from applying, please contact us and we can see if there is a way we can help.

Payment Plans
Interest free payments can distribute the cost over the duration of your course. Payment of fees can not be extended past the program’s end date, additionally, the degree will not be awarded until all fees have been received.

Fees for UK, EU and International students are the same.

This does not include travel or accommodation costs. Students are required to buy, rent or access additional books, scores, recordings, films and other reference material.

Time Commitment
In the UK, an MA involves 180 academic credits and each credit represents an approximate 10 hours of work. This is approximately a full-time working week over the course of a year. The MFA requires 240 credits. 10 hours per credit includes research, reading, writing or orchestrating music and time spent in discussion with tutors.

For both master’s degrees, there are over twenty projects including the major project at the end of the course. Projects are divided into formative and summative; formative projects are there to guide you and help you develop the skills to succeed, both in your summative assignments and in your working life beyond the course. Formative projects do not count towards your final grade. There will be one summative project per module, which will contribute towards your final grade.
Because everyone has a different background, you are warmly invited to contact us so we can offer advice and guidance.

**Academic**

Applicants should have a bachelor’s degree or equivalent in any subject.

**RPL**

If you do not have a previous degree, then other experience can be taken into account, including work-based experience. This includes professional development courses such as Music for the Media and Cinematic Orchestration. This pathway is described as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and is assessed on a case-by-case basis. This pathway is not available for MFA Professional Composition & Orchestration.

**Language**

If you do not speak English as a first language, then you will need IELTS Level 6.5 or equivalent. There is more information available at: http://www.ielts.org. You will need to provide us with your certificate as soon as you are offered a place on our course, you should arrange to complete your language test individually.

**PROFESSIONAL COMPOSITION AND ORCHESTRATION MFA**

**Entry Requirements**

You need to have a good command of technology and music theory as both will be essential in completing this course. We are happy to advise you, if you are not confident with either of these skills.

**Technology**

The course moves fast, particularly for full time students. You should be competent with the use of a digital audio workstation such as *Logic*, *Cubase*, or *Digital Performer* as well as a score writing program (either *Sibelius* or *Finale*). You will need to write music fluently and quickly.

Applications should be of a good production standard. We are happy to listen to your music and give you advice.

All applicants to the following courses; MFA Game Music and Audio, MA Sound Design for Video Games and MA Composing for Video Games are also required to have a computer with at least 1GB GPU (recommended 2GB).

Applicants to MFA Game Music and Audio and Sound Design for Video Games also need to have access to recording equipment of a minimum standard of a Zoom H4 and at least two external microphones.

**Music Theory**

You should be confident with music theory, this means reading and writing scores. You may be asked to complete a short music theory test upon application.

Whilst a valuable skill, students on Sound Design for Video Games are not required to have a Music Theory background.

**Course Transfers**

Students enrolled on to MA Orchestration for Film, Games and Television or MA Professional Media Composition can transfer onto the Professional Composition and Orchestration MFA at the end of their second term (i.e. before they start their final major project).

Students enrolled on to MA Sound Design for Video Games or MA Composing for Video Games can transfer onto the Game Music and Audio MFA at the end of their second term (i.e. before they start their final major project). Students from these pathways can not transfer onto the traditional media pathways and vice versa.
PROFESSIONAL MEDIA COMPOSITION

Entry Requirements
The course moves fast, particularly for full time students. You should be competent with the use of a digital audio workstation such as Logic, Cubase, or Digital Performer as well as a score writing program (either Sibelius or Finale). You will need to write music fluently and quickly.

Applications should be of a good production standard. We are happy to listen to your music and give you advice. A high level of music theory is a big advantage but we appreciate there are many different ways to create a great score and you will be judged principally on the potential shown in your portfolio.

Music Theory
We do not set music theory criteria for this MA as we do not wish to exclude composers who have not had traditional, classical music training.

ORCHESTRATION FOR FILM GAMES AND TELEVISION

Entry Requirements
You need to have a good command of technology and music theory as both will be essential in completing this course. We are happy to advise you, if you are not confident with either of these skills.

Music Theory
You should be confident with music theory, this means reading and writing scores. You may be asked to complete a short music theory test upon application.

Music Technology Hardware and Software
The course moves fast, particularly for full time students. You should be competent with the use of a digital audio workstation such as Logic, Cubase, or Digital Performer as well as a score writing program (either Sibelius or Finale). You will need to write music fluently and quickly.

Hardware
You will need a computer and ancillary equipment (MIDI keyboard, speakers/monitors etc.), Mac or PC, capable of producing professional quality music. The minimum specifications of your computer are:

16GB of RAM
Quad core, 2.2ghz

You might also work with a main computer and a slave. This is a good way of creating a very powerful setup relatively economically.

Your Digital Audio Workstation (DAW or Sequencer)
Our recommended list:
Logic
Cubase
Pro Tools
Ableton Live
Reason
FL Studio
Reaper
Sonar
Digital Performer
Nuendo

Books, Films, Scores and Recordings
Throughout the course, you will be required to watch films, read books, study scores and listen to recordings. These are, for the most part, not included in the price of your course. You should expect to have to purchase, rent or borrow films, recordings and printed material. The reading and listening list gives you guidance to the minimum reference material you will need. This list is a minimum and you should expect to have to access further resources during the course of your program of study.
Requirements

Sound Libraries
There are many sampled sound libraries capable of creating professional quality mock-ups and recordings. For guidance, as a minimum we recommend:

- East West Quantum Leap Symphonic Orchestra Gold
- Vienna Symphonic Library Special Edition – Woodwinds

Others including Damage from Heavyocity, Emotional Piano from Soundiron and Adagietto from 8Dio are also recommended.

The availability and pricing of suitable technology, software and sound libraries is constantly changing. So please check our website for further recommendations and if you have any questions about the suitability of your technical resources please contact the Course Manager before completing your application.

Internet Connection
You will be uploading and downloading a large quantity of material so you should have access to a reliable broadband with a speed of at least 2Mbs or more.

Internet Software
We have found that the Google Chrome & Mozilla Firefox browser is the most compatible with the Adobe Connect webinar software we use, which will also be an important part of your course.

All your assignments are uploaded through the Student Portal on our website. This can also be accessed with any standard FTP client, for example CuteFTP on a PC or Transmit on a Mac.

Skype is a telecommunications application software which we use to conduct interviews, vivas and tutorials.

File Compression Software:
File compression software is currently built into both the Mac OSX and Windows system software, but other alternatives, such as 7zip or WinRAR are available.

PDF
- PC: PDFCreator or similar, capable of producing PDF files
- Mac: PDF creation software is part of the OSX operating system

We also recommend the Adobe Create Suite for numerous multimedia applications, such as video and audio conversion and PDF creation.

Video Compression (Professional Media Composition – MA)
You will need to download the latest version of QuickTime from Apple, which is free.

You will need a good video compression program to reduce the file size of your movies when submitting assignments and when sending your work to real-life clients. Although many others are available we use and recommend the following and will offer suggested settings during the course.

- Aimersoft Video Converter Ultimate

Pro Tools
(Required for Professional Media Composition students)
Pro Tools is the industry standard software for preparing, recording and mixing orchestral music. Many students will not have personal experience using this software, however this will be covered extensively during the course.

All students will require Pro Tools and either Sibelius or Finale. Both Sibelius and Pro Tools are available to enrolled students at a significant academic discount.

Kontakt (Orchestration Only)
Students taking the Kontakt elective will need to purchase the current, full version of Kontakt.
APPLICATION PROCEDURE

You begin your application by clicking the **Apply Now** button on the course web page. You will first be required to create a ThinkSpace account. You will then need to pay the non-returnable application fee of £75 / €85 / $100. Once your payment has been processed, you will receive an email with your login details for your student account. Log in and follow the instructions online to complete the application form.

We will need your personal details, including your academic, musical and technical background. If you are offered a place, we will require copies of the documents that confirm your academic history, identity and language ability (if English is not your first language).

Your portfolio is the most important part of the application.

We would like to hear not less than 10, and not more than 15 minutes of music.

There should be a minimum of 3 different pieces.

The music should be submitted as MP3 files.

The music must be entirely your own work. You must make it clear in the covering letter where construction kits, loops or any other pre-recorded audio that are not your own work have been used (excluding drum and percussion loops).

Applicants must include a short covering letter that includes;

> Applicant’s name and email address
> Applicant’s technical resources; DAW and main sound libraries so we can take this into account.
> Any other information the applicant feels may be relevant.

This covering letter should be as a text file or Microsoft Word document. Applicants should follow the instructions online to upload their portfolio and covering letter.

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PROFESSIONAL COMPOSITION AND ORCHESTRATION MFA

We are looking for music that demonstrates your ability to write competent music in a variety of styles, including tonal orchestral compositions, and produce a reasonable quality sampled mock-up using a Digital Audio Workstation (Logic, Cubase etc.). Audio files exported directly from a score editor like Sibelius or Finale are unlikely to be sufficient. Applicants will need to demonstrate evidence of a solid base on which to build, both musically and technically, and the potential to develop as a media composer.

You will also submit a written orchestral score of at least one piece of music of not less than two minutes’ duration. The score can be as a PDF, Sibelius or Finale file.

Applicants without formal musical qualifications will be required to take a music theory test.

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PROFESSIONAL MUSIC COMPOSITION MA

We would like to hear not less than 10, and not more than 15 minutes of music. There should be a minimum of three different pieces. The music should be submitted as MP3 files.

We are looking for music that demonstrates the applicant’s ability to write competently, preferably in a range of styles, and produce a good quality finished recording of their composition. We are looking for evidence that they have a good command of one of the major DAWs (Logic, Cubase etc.).

We are looking for a solid base musically and technically, and the potential to develop as a media composer. This does not mean we are expecting everyone to write traditional cinematic orchestral music. We welcome a wide range of musical approaches.
**ORCHESTRATION FOR FILM, GAMES AND TELEVISION MA**

We are looking for music that demonstrates your ability to write competent orchestral music and produce a reasonable quality sampled mock-up using a Digital Audio Workstation (Logic, Cubase etc.). Music written and exported directly from a score editor like Sibelius or Finale is unlikely to be sufficient. Applicants will need to demonstrate evidence of a solid base on which to build, both musically and technically, and the potential to develop as a media orchestrator.

You will also submit a written orchestral score of at least one piece of music of not less than two minutes’ duration. The score can be as a PDF, Sibelius or Finale file.

Applicants without formal musical qualifications will be required to take a music theory test.

**GAME MUSIC AND AUDIO, SOUND DESIGN AND COMPOSING FOR VIDEO GAMES**

We understand that some students may have not have previous experience with specific sound design tasks before and may not have a substantial portfolio of such. To assess your ability for the Sound Design for Video Games and Game Music and Audio, we can also review your general audio production ability. Please feel free to submit other examples of this work, including but not limited to: voice over production, mixing, and music editing.

Students applying to the games courses are also required to complete a technical and creative task as part of their application. These tasks should take you no more than a day together and you will also be required to submit your portfolio and supporting letter with your application.

For further enquiries on your application please contact ThinkSpace via email: info@thinkspaceeducation.com

**What happens next?**

We will review all applications within four weeks. Applicants may be offered a place on the course of their choice straight away. Most shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a short simple project to a deadline. Where the first choice course intake is already full, we may offer you a place at a later start date.

Once offered a place, applicants will have two weeks to accept the offer, submit the required documentation and pay the £1000 / €1400 / $1650 non-returnable deposit to confirm their place.

*All details may be subject to change.*

*For details of all of our academic policies, please visit the policies page on our website: https://thinkspaceeducation.com/policies*