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South Auckland students chase music dreams

A rocketing demand by people in South Auckland chasing a music career dream has almost doubled numbers at a mid year intake at the Otago campus of the Music and Audio Institute of New Zealand (MAINZ), a faculty of Tai Poutini Polytechnic.

The first mid-year Certificate in Foundation Sound and Music programme last year had 22 students but the number has soared this year to 39.

“The word has spread about how amazing it is,” says programme leader Phil Oxenham.

The Foundation Sound and Music programme is at the renowned Otago Music Arts Centre (OMAC), which celebrated its 25th anniversary last month.

“We are part of the community and our students are living the dream,” says Mr Oxenham.

He says many in the mid-year intake are Pasifika, aged from their teens to their 20s, aspiring to be the next big name producer.

The Certificate in Foundation Sound and Music Foundation programme is one of three mid-year programmes launched by MAINZ, driven by a growing demand for people to become professional musicians or audio engineers, or to begin general sound and music studies, according to MAINZ Associate Dean John Quigley

The MAINZ’s music programme has associations with stars like Gin Wigmore, The Naked and Famous and Zowie.

More than 100 students are kick-starting their careers at either the Otago Foundation Sound and Music programme or at two others at the Auckland campus in Victoria Street; the Certificate in Contemporary Music Performance, and Certificate in Audio Engineering and Music Production.

“The demand is there and the industry wants people with skills they can use to hit the ground running,” says John Quigley.

The Certificate in Audio Engineering and Music Production programme has also produced top performers, including people now running studios in New York and working with superstars, says Mr Quigley. The new mid-year intake has again attracted students looking at careers in music production as well as radio, television and film.

John Quigley says MAINZ programmes are supported by the music industry.

Leading figures sit on advisory committees, assisting with programme development so students are given the sorts of skills that make them immediately useful to employers.

The Chief Executive Officer of Recorded Music NZ, Damian Vaughan, says: “MAINZ consistently produces well-informed students equipped with practical music knowledge. This experience ensures they have a solid foundation to launch into the music industry.”

As well as specialised music and sound education, MAINZ students also learn skills about running a business because a lot will of them will be self employed, he says.

While the mid-year intake programmes are now underway, there will also be the usual February intakes at MAINZ for the three Certificate programmes as well as the Diploma in Music and Event Management.

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