

SØRAV MUSIC ACADEMY

LEVEL 6 · PROFESSIONAL PROJECTS

A capstone-oriented guide for integrating planning, session organisation, mixing, vocal production, composition, mastering, quality control, stem delivery and portfolio presentation.

How to use this guide

Treat each lesson as a project brief. Keep your Logic Pro session editable, save recoverable versions and document decisions. Technical settings should follow the project specification; the goal is reliable, musical delivery rather than plugin count or loudness alone.

Project 1: Project Planning, Briefs and References

Objective: Translate a creative brief into clear goals, a realistic workflow, references and verifiable deliverables.

Define the brief

Record the intended audience, genre, emotional direction, core hook, deadline, revision allowance and delivery formats. Separate fixed requirements from flexible creative choices.

Turn goals into decisions

Convert broad words such as warm, intimate, wide or punchy into testable choices: performance, arrangement density, tonal balance, dynamics, space and stereo placement. Ask for examples if a term is ambiguous.

Reference tracks responsibly

Choose references for specific reasons—vocal balance, low-end translation, arrangement density or overall energy. Compare at matched perceived loudness and avoid copying a reference's master level as a mixing target.

Scope and milestones

Break work into stages: source review, arrangement/recording fixes, balance, processing, revision, quality control and delivery. Estimate time and identify dependencies such as missing stems or approvals.

Document decisions

Keep a project brief, version log and client notes. Capture what changed and why so revisions remain controlled rather than becoming an unstructured series of tweaks.

Brief-to-delivery map

Brief + references → Plan + milestones → Produce → Review → Deliver
A clear brief turns subjective language into decisions that can be checked.

Logic Pro practical

Create a one-page brief for a song in Logic Pro. Add tempo, key if known, style, emotional target, references and what each reference teaches. Create arrangement markers and a checklist for mix, revision and delivery.

Review / listening check

Choose two references and compare one element at a time at similar loudness. Write observations about vocal position, bass balance, density, space and section contrast without trying to copy every element.

Risks and common mistakes

- Treating vague adjectives as technical instructions without clarification.
- Comparing references at different loudness levels.
- Starting detailed processing before checking arrangement and source problems.
- Failing to record revision decisions.

Required deliverable

Submit a project brief, two-reference comparison sheet, milestone list and agreed deliverables.

Project 2: Professional Session Organisation and Routing

Objective: Prepare a portable, clearly labelled Logic Pro session with predictable routing and revision-safe versions.

Audit the source material

Check that all expected stems, recordings, tempo information and reference files are present. Listen for missing sections, unintended clipping, noise and inconsistent start points before editing.

Naming and grouping

Use meaningful names, consistent track colours and groups such as drums, bass, music, lead, backing vocals and effects. Keep naming useful even when colour is unavailable.

Routing and buses

Route related tracks to buses when shared processing or level control is useful. Know whether a track is feeding a bus, output or send, and avoid accidental double routing. Label buses by function.

Session portability

Keep audio assets inside the project or use Logic Pro's collection/consolidation options as appropriate. Note third-party plugins, sample libraries and external files that may not travel with the project.

Version safety

Save a clean source version before major edits. Use dated or numbered versions and keep a change log. Never overwrite the only approved version without a recoverable backup.

Portable session workflow

Audit media → Name/group tracks → Check routing → Save version → Collect assets → Reopen copy

A session is not portable until its referenced media and dependencies are available.

Logic Pro practical

Create a session with named groups, colour coding, arrangement markers, vocal and instrument buses, and clearly labelled reverb/delay sends. Save a new version, collect the required audio assets and reopen the copied project.

Review / listening check

Solo and mute groups to confirm routing is correct. Check that sends are post- or pre-fader as intended, that buses do not feed themselves, and that muting a group behaves predictably.

Risks and common mistakes

- Relying on colour alone instead of names.
- Creating bus routes without checking the signal path.
- Leaving external audio references outside the project without documenting them.
- Saving over the clean source.

Required deliverable

Deliver a well-organised Logic Pro project with a track map, routing notes, version name and verified copy that reopens correctly.

Project 3: Complete Mix Project: Balance, Processing and Automation

Objective: Build a mix from static balance to selective processing and automation, making decisions in musical context.

Start with a static balance

Set levels and panning before inserting many plugins. Establish the lead, rhythm section, bass foundation and harmonic support. A strong balance often reveals which processing is truly necessary.

Resolve conflicts by role

Identify masking between instruments that occupy similar ranges or rhythms. Decide whether to change arrangement, performance, level, pan, EQ or timing before applying processing everywhere.

Process with purpose

Use EQ to address tonal conflicts, compression to control dynamic behaviour, and ambience to create depth. Make changes that solve an audible problem or strengthen a musical intention, not simply because a track usually has a plugin.

Automation is arrangement

Automate lead level, effects sends, mutes or section transitions where the song needs movement. Automation should support phrasing and contrast while avoiding distracting jumps.

Check the whole song

Listen from beginning to end, including transitions and quiet sections. A mix that works only in the chorus or while soloing individual tracks is not finished.

Mix decision order

Static balance → Resolve conflicts → Selective processing → Automation → Full-song QC
Work from the whole mix and make changes that serve the musical result.

Logic Pro practical

Mix a supplied or self-recorded multitrack in Logic Pro. First create a static balance with no inserts, then add only justified processing. Automate one vocal phrase and one section transition. Save a pre-processing version for comparison.

Review / listening check

Compare the mix at low playback level, in mono and on a second playback system. Note which element loses clarity first and return to the full mix before making a change.

Risks and common mistakes

- Adding plugins before setting balance.
- Mixing tracks in solo for too long.
- Using master loudness as a substitute for balance.
- Automating every parameter without a musical reason.

Required deliverable

Submit a full-song mix, a static-balance version, a short processing/automation decision log and a list of translation checks.

Project 4: Vocal Production and Editing Project

Objective: Deliver a consistent, expressive lead vocal with clean edits, supporting layers and intentional effects.

Choose the best performance

Review complete takes for emotion, pitch, timing, diction, tone and noise. Select phrases in context and preserve the original recordings.

Comp and edit carefully

Build a comp with clear edit boundaries, crossfades and natural breaths. Correct only issues that distract; over-editing can make a vocal feel disconnected or lifeless.

Tuning and timing with restraint

If pitch or timing correction is needed, use the lightest approach that meets the brief. Preserve intentional slides, vibrato, consonants and rhythmic feel. Always audition the vocal against the music.

Layering and vocal roles

Doubles can add thickness; harmonies can add colour; ad-libs can create response and energy. Keep each layer's role clear and avoid filling every gap just because a track exists.

Effects and automation

Use EQ, compression, de-essing, reverb and delay as needed for the source and arrangement. Automate phrases and effects sends so words remain intelligible and the vocal feels connected to the track.

Vocal production chain

Select performance → Comp → Edit/crossfade → Correct if needed → Balance layers → Automate effects

Keep original takes and preserve expressive performance details.

Logic Pro practical

Comp a lead from at least three takes, preserve the source takes, create one double or harmony where musically useful, and automate a reverb/delay send on phrase endings. Check edits at normal speed and in the full arrangement.

Review / listening check

Compare the dry comp, edited comp and final vocal chain at matched loudness. Listen for consonant clarity, breath continuity, sibilance, edit clicks and whether effects obscure words.

Risks and common mistakes

- Selecting takes only by waveform size.
- Over-tuning expressive notes.
- Using doubles that compete with the lead.
- Leaving reverb or delay equally loud on every phrase.

Required deliverable

Deliver a lead-vocal comp, supporting layers if appropriate, edit notes and a vocal-effects/automation rationale.

Project 5: Composition and Arrangement Brief

Objective: Create a coherent piece from a creative brief, developing motifs and arranging sections to support a clear musical arc.

Turn the brief into musical constraints

Define the emotional direction, tempo range, harmonic language, instrumentation, intended duration and role of the hook. Constraints guide decisions without dictating every note.

Develop a motif

Create a short rhythm or melodic idea that can be repeated, varied, reharmonised or moved to another instrument. A recognisable motif creates cohesion.

Build section contrast

Use register, density, rhythmic activity, harmony and instrumentation to distinguish sections. A chorus can feel larger through contrast and stronger hook placement rather than simply adding tracks.

Arrange for the lead

Leave space for vocals or the main melodic element. Use fills and counter-lines in gaps, and reduce layers when they mask the lyric or hook.

Review structure

Map intro, verse, pre-chorus, chorus, bridge and outro—or a form appropriate to the genre. Make every section contribute to development and remove material that does not serve the brief.

Arrangement arc

Motif → Verse/section idea → Contrast → Hook/peak → Transition → Resolution

Contrast can come from rhythm, register, harmony, density and instrumentation.

Logic Pro practical

Create a 60–90 second arrangement in Logic Pro with at least three distinct sections. Build one motif, vary it across sections, use markers, and automate one transition. Export a rough arrangement for feedback.

Review / listening check

Listen to the arrangement without focusing on individual sounds. Can you identify the hook, section boundaries and energy arc? Note where contrast is clear or where the piece feels repetitive.

Risks and common mistakes

- Writing loops without a larger form.
- Adding layers instead of developing the motif.
- Making every section equally dense.
- Ignoring the brief when selecting sounds or tempo.

Required deliverable

Submit a brief, section map, motif, 60–90 second arrangement and explanation of three decisions that support the intended arc.

Project 6: Mastering and Delivery Project

Objective: Prepare a mix for delivery, make restrained mastering decisions and verify technical specifications without chasing loudness blindly.

Start from a reliable mix

Check balance, clicks, fades, unintended clipping and the final tail before mastering. Fix mix problems in the mix rather than forcing a mastering chain to compensate.

Reference and tonal balance

Compare references at matched loudness and focus on specific attributes. Use meters to inform listening, not replace it. Make small, justified tonal changes and check on more than one system.

Dynamics and limiting

Compression and limiting can control peaks and change density, but excessive processing can reduce punch, increase distortion and fatigue the listener. Choose settings based on the source and target.

Loudness and true peak

LUFS estimates perceived loudness; sample peak and true peak describe different aspects of peak level. Delivery requirements vary by platform and client. Avoid treating one loudness number as a universal rule.

Export specifications

Confirm sample rate, bit depth, channel format, file type, start/end range and naming. If a lossy version is needed, create it from a suitable high-quality source and verify the result.

Mastering QC path

Approved mix → Tonal/dynamic checks → Export specification → Render → Re-import → Full listen
Loudness measurements inform decisions; they do not replace listening.

Logic Pro practical

Create a restrained final chain on a copy of the approved mix. Compare bypassed and processed versions at matched loudness, inspect peak/LUFS meters, export to a written specification and re-import the file for full playback quality control.

Review / listening check

Compare the approved mix and final export at matched loudness. Check transient impact, vocal clarity, low-end stability, stereo image, distortion and the final tail.

Risks and common mistakes

- Using loudness as the only measure of quality.
- Applying limiting to repair a poor mix.
- Comparing references at unmatched levels.
- Exporting without checking the actual rendered file.

Required deliverable

Submit the approved mix, final master, delivery specification sheet, meter notes and a completed export QC checklist.

Project 7: Quality Control, Revisions and Client Communication

Objective: Manage revisions professionally by turning feedback into specific actions and checking each new version against the brief.

Clarify feedback

Translate comments such as brighter, warmer, bigger or more upfront into questions about the perceived issue and intended result. Ask for a timestamp or reference when the request is unclear.

Revision planning

Collect feedback into one list, group related requests and separate technical fixes from creative preferences. Confirm which version is being reviewed and avoid acting on contradictory comments without clarification.

Change one thing at a time

Make controlled changes and compare against the prior approved version. Keep levels matched for A/B checks and document what changed so unintended regressions are easier to catch.

Technical quality control

Check start/end points, clicks, fades, missing parts, routing, mono compatibility when relevant, file format and naming. Verify the final exports rather than trusting session playback alone.

Communicate clearly

Send concise version notes, identify deliverables and mention any unresolved decisions. Be respectful and factual; never promise a technical result you have not checked.

Revision control

Feedback → Clarify → Action list → Change → A/B at matched level → Verify → Version notes
Confirm ambiguous requests and check that each change did not create a new problem.

Logic Pro practical

Create a revision log with timestamp, request, interpretation, action and verification. Make two controlled revisions to a practice mix, save numbered versions and compare them at matched loudness before approval.

Review / listening check

A/B the previous and revised versions. Confirm the requested change is audible and that it has not harmed vocal clarity, low-end balance, transitions or another section.

Risks and common mistakes

- Guessing at ambiguous feedback.
- Making several unrelated changes at once.
- Losing track of which version was approved.
- Sending a new export without checking it.

Required deliverable

Submit a revision log, versioned files and a short delivery message that lists changes, files and any remaining questions.

Project 8: Stems, Alternate Mixes and Project Portability

Objective: Prepare consistent stems and alternate versions that align in time, use agreed processing rules and open reliably on another system.

Define the stem brief

Confirm stem groups, whether effects are included, whether the master-bus processing should be printed, file format, start/end points and whether all stems must sum to the approved mix.

Consistent export boundaries

Export stems from the same start and end points, including required tails. Avoid exporting one stem from a different cycle range or omitting a pickup or effect decay.

Master processing considerations

If the master bus has processing, stems exported through it separately may not sum exactly to the stereo mix. Agree whether stems should be pre-master, post-master, or prepared by another specified method.

Alternate mixes

Instrumental, TV mix, clean version, performance mix or no-lead versions should be named clearly and checked for unintended mutes, edits or effects changes.

Portable project delivery

Collect media, document plugins and external libraries, and verify the project on a separate folder or system when possible. A session file alone may not include all referenced assets.

Stem delivery alignment

Same start/end → Agreed processing → Export groups → Import at same start → Check sum → Label
Master-bus and shared processing can affect whether stems sum exactly to the stereo mix.

Logic Pro practical

Create a stem plan, export drums, bass, music and vocals from identical start/end points, and import them into a new session at the same start position. Check alignment and sum behaviour against the agreed delivery approach.

Review / listening check

Recombine the stems and compare with the approved mix. Note any expected differences caused by master-bus processing, sidechains or effects routing.

Risks and common mistakes

- Using different export ranges for different stems.
- Assuming separately master-processed stems will sum perfectly.
- Forgetting effect tails or muted alternate tracks.
- Sending a project without referenced audio assets.

Required deliverable

Deliver a stem list, aligned stem exports, one alternate mix and a portable project copy with clear notes about processing and assets.

Project 9: Portfolio, Case Studies and Professional Presentation

Objective: Present selected work with honest role descriptions, clear before/after context and evidence of thoughtful production decisions.

Select work strategically

Choose projects that demonstrate different strengths—recording, mixing, production, composition or delivery. A smaller, coherent portfolio is often more effective than a large uncurated folder.

Explain your contribution accurately

State what you actually did: production, arrangement, recording, editing, mixing, mastering or a subset. Credit collaborators and obtain permission before sharing work that is not yours to publish.

Build a case study

Describe the brief, constraints, challenges, decisions, process and result. Explain why choices were made rather than listing plugins as if plugin names prove quality.

Demonstrate the work

Use a clear audio excerpt, relevant visuals and concise notes. If using before/after comparisons, match loudness and identify what changed so the comparison is fair.

Professional delivery

Use consistent file names, a concise bio, accurate contact information and a simple way to hear the work. Keep private client material private unless you have permission to share it.

Case study structure

Brief → Challenge → Decision → Process → Result → Credits + approved audio
Describe your actual contribution and get permission before sharing client work.

Logic Pro practical

Select three projects or self-directed studies. Write a one-page case study for each, include your precise role, challenge, key decisions, deliverables and a short approved excerpt. Check permissions and credits before publishing.

Review / listening check

Ask a listener to review your selected excerpts without seeing the notes. Then share the case study and ask whether the stated decisions are audible and understandable.

Risks and common mistakes

- Claiming roles or results you did not deliver.
- Sharing client work without permission.
- Using loudness-mismatched before/after examples.
- Listing plugins without explaining decisions.

Required deliverable

Create a portfolio page or folder with three case studies, accurate credits, approved audio excerpts and a professional project handoff sample.

Project 10: Capstone: Complete Production Project

Objective: Integrate planning, composition, recording, mixing, mastering, delivery and documentation into one complete project.

Phase 1 — Brief and pre-production

Define the creative target, arrangement map, references, recording needs, deliverables and milestone dates. Confirm what material is original, licensed or cleared.

Phase 2 — Production and capture

Create the arrangement, record or program the parts, organise the session and keep backups. Maintain clear names and preserve editable source material.

Phase 3 — Edit and mix

Comp and edit where needed, create a static balance, process selectively and automate musical changes. Review the full song and check translation.

Phase 4 — Master and export

Prepare a final version from the approved mix, follow the written technical specification and verify the rendered file from beginning to end.

Phase 5 — Review and archive

Collect feedback, document revisions, prepare stems or alternates if required, make a portable project copy and write a case study explaining the workflow and decisions.

Capstone production cycle

Plan → Produce/record → Edit → Mix → Master/export → QC → Archive + case study

Preserve editable sources and verify every deliverable before declaring the project complete.

Logic Pro practical

Complete an original 2–3 minute production or a well-defined excerpt if the full song is not feasible. Keep a brief, session versions, editable sources, mix, final export, QC sheet and a case study. Use the downloadable capstone checklist to track progress.

Review / listening check

Run a final blind review on at least two playback systems at sensible levels. Check the start, section transitions, vocal or lead clarity, low end, mono behaviour where relevant, fades and ending.

Risks and common mistakes

- Skipping pre-production and then rebuilding the arrangement late.
- Failing to preserve versions or source recordings.
- Making final changes without checking the export.
- Presenting a project without credits, notes or delivery specifications.

Required deliverable

Submit a complete capstone folder containing brief, organised Logic Pro project, final mix/master as required, stems/alternates if specified, QC checklist, revision log and portfolio case study.