

2022 HSC Music 1 Aural Skills Marking Guidelines — Written Examination

Question 1

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes in some detail how pitch is used in the excerpt• Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and examples	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes how pitch is used in the excerpt• Demonstrates an aural understanding, using observations and examples	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies some features of pitch in the excerpt• Demonstrates a basic aural understanding	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates a limited aural understanding	1

Sample answer:

The excerpt starts with a piano playing a repeated melodic ostinato at a high register. An unpitched percussion instrument enters playing a second repeated ostinato in a bass register. The bass piano ostinato has a contour that descends by a leap before ascending by a step. A male vocalist enters singing in a moderately high register. A repeated vocal melodic ostinato gradually fades in during this verse section. A very high-pitched shimmering synthesised instrument plays a rapid alternation between three or four pitches. An unpitched wind sound effect marks the transition to the next section, which features backing vocals sliding to a sustained note, with the main vocal being doubled on every second phrase. The excerpt is in a major key with an accompaniment progression of only three different chords.

Answers could include:

- The first piano ostinato comprises of a single note repeated three times, followed by a higher note heard at the end of the bar.
- The second repeated piano melodic ostinato in a bass register alternates at the end of the bar, with the second bar featuring a higher note than the first bar of the ostinato with even note lengths.
- A shaker sound also enters that is unpitched for the rest of the excerpt.
- The male vocalist, singing a moderately high register, enters with a generally descending melodic contour. As the male vocalist enters the lower piano ostinato is expanded with additional medium pitched notes providing greater melodic movement.
- The LH piano riff is C – G – A = C then descends P4 to G; steps up a tone to A; leaps a minor 3rd to return to C.

- A repeated vocal melodic ostinato gradually fades in during the first section, singing a short phrase of three descending adjacent notes.
- A high indefinite pitched snare enters accenting the back beat.
- Repeated harmonic chord pattern over four bars: (C | G | am | am). This pattern is the chordal basis of every section in the excerpt.

Question 2

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains in detail how repetition is used in the excerpt Demonstrates a highly developed aural understanding, using well-supported observations and examples 	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains in some detail how repetition is used in the excerpt Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and examples 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes the use of repetition in the excerpt Demonstrates an aural understanding, using observations and examples 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a basic understanding of the use of repetition in the excerpt Demonstrates a basic aural understanding 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a limited aural understanding 	1

Answers could include:

Repetition is used through:

Pitch

- The opening interval of a perfect fifth is repeated by the trumpets and trombones during the Introduction.
- An ascending cymbal scrape is heard twice during the Introduction.
- Section A melody is played by the first and second violins in unison accompanied by the lower strings and percussion. The opening interval is a minor 3rd.
- Section A1 melody is an exact repeat of the A melody, with a change in the last bar of the melody, where there is a passage of tom-tom drumming and the strings divide.
- The low, mid and high tom-toms are used in sections A and A1 as a response to each idea that is played by the violins.

Duration

- The trumpets and trombone play a repeated rhythm in the Introduction in 6/4. The flute and clarinets play a repeated three note ascending cross rhythm against the opening trumpet and trombone rhythm.
- During the Introduction the tam-tam plays on beat four of the bar in alternation with the cellos and double basses who play pizzicato on beat four of the next bar.
- In Section A and A1 the violins play two rhythmic ostinato ideas. The first is a question phrase for three bars played twice with the two bar answer phrase also played twice.
- This is accompanied by different harmonic ostinatos from the violas, cellos and double basses while the whip, cymbal and tom-toms also accompany in short bursts.
- Repetition is created by using the same melodic rhythmic patterns throughout sections A and A1.

Structure

- Introduction of six bars – slow but brief Introduction by trumpets and trombones at Andante accompanied by the flute and clarinet playing repeated quavers. The cellos and double basses are also playing pizzicato in alternation with the tam tam. This melodic idea is repeated twice.

- Section A consists of ten bars of the violins playing a quick repeated two semi-quaver/quaver figure followed by quaver syncopation that gives forward momentum to the piece.
- The violin melody is irregular (3/2/2 pattern) and is repeated twice during Section A. This melodic idea is then repeated again at a higher pitch accompanied by cellos, double bass, and tam-tam.
- Section A is repeated (A1).

Dynamics and expressive techniques

- Excerpt begins loudly for the trumpets and trombones who play with a broad and full sound both times.
- In Section A and A1 the violins play in unison at moderate volume with a lot of energy.
- The cellos are bowed in section A and A1 while the double basses continue to play pizzicato throughout the entire excerpt.
- In Section A the tam-tam returns to being played with the metallic beater on the rim at mezzo forte which provides repetition.
- Excerpt finishes with a crescendo as the tom-toms return.

Texture

- Homophonic texture used throughout.
- The texture comprises a single melody layer in the opening bars of the Introduction section before a low note played by the bass trombone and tuba, with a roll on the tam-tam, thickens the texture.
- The texture in Sections A and A1 has a rich sound provided by violin melody that is played in its low register, accompanied by the rest of the string section.
- The texture thickens with additional layers and repeated ideas being added as the work progresses.
- A repeated ostinato layer is heard in mid-section.

Tone colour

- The tam-tam struck with a metal beater on the rim which has a shimmery, light tone colour.
- In Section A the tam-tam returns to being played each time heard in the excerpt on the rim which provides repetition.
- In Section A and A1 a whip is used by the percussion section and it has a sharp, dry tone colour which is repeated.

Question 3

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes in detail how texture and structure are used in the excerpt Demonstrates a highly developed aural understanding, using well-supported observations and examples 	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes in some detail how texture and structure are used in the excerpt Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and examples 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes the texture and/or structure of the excerpt Demonstrates an aural understanding, using observations and examples 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a basic understanding of the texture and/or the structure of the excerpt Demonstrates a basic aural understanding 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a limited aural understanding 	1

Answers could include:

The phrase structure is balanced throughout mostly in 4 × 4 bars structural blocks.

1st Chorus

- Melody layer provided by female and male vocals. Accompaniment layers include percussion, guitar, synthesiser, resulting in a homophonic texture.
- Female and male lead vocal *It makes you want to dance . . .* (doubled at the octave on these lyrics) is supported with female and male backing harmony with occasional melisma.
- Handclaps, tambourine and drum kit accompany with a full, dense percussion layer.
- Accompaniment layer – synthesised bass provides a thick bass layer, which is doubled an octave lower.
- Accompaniment layer – rhythm guitar and synthesiser thicken the texture with regular chordal changes.

Bridge

- Homophonic layering continues but changes to suddenly sparse texture as the vocal melodic layer is swapped for the synthesiser, and the accompaniment figures are less complex than the 1st chorus.
- Synthesiser plays a bluesy, melodic solo in mid-high register with use of ornamentation, scalar passages and varying phrase lengths.
- Agogo bells enter, accompanying the melody with a bell-like syncopated pattern.
- Kick drum, hi-hats, and lower toms play a complex repeated pattern throughout the bridge section, changing the groove and feel.
- Texture is varied with both male, female and vocoded vocals and brass ‘stabs’.

Pre-chorus

- Two bar break.
- A sudden change to a texturally sparse break with two bar sustained synthesised brass sforzandos to thicken the texture.
- Rapid, repeated conga rhythms thicken rhythmic accompaniment.

- Kick drum emphasises *4 on the floor* = pattern of repeated (6) crotchet 'kicks' then four quavers on beats 3 + 4 to which add to textural density/building to the next section.

2nd Chorus

(1st 4 bars)

- Texture changes with the backing vocals layer returning with the lyrics *Make you want to dance . . .*
- Kick drum exits reducing textural density.
- Hand claps on 2nd and 4th beats provide an accompaniment role.
- Rhythm guitar enters, continuing its harmonic accompaniment from the 1st Chorus.
- Spoken male voice enters with a call and response with the backing vocals.

(2nd 4 bars)

- Synthesised bass enters with a bass riff providing a harmonic and rhythmic role.
- Backing singers add stylistics *oos* which increases the textural density as these increase the pitch range in the music.

3rd Chorus

- All parts continue from previous section.
- With additional percussive layers drums/agogo/conga re-enter.
- Texture grows more dense due to added percussion layers and repeated backing vocals *Everybody turn the music.*
- Synthesised brass thickens texture with a syncopated riff.
- Female backing vocals repeat *Turn the music* on the 2nd and 4th beat.
- The vocal lines split up in this section. There are some solo vocal motifs that are layered in during this section.

Solo

- Texture lightens and returns to homophonic as all vocals drop out, with the synthesiser returning to provide a bluesy solo melody.
- Congas provide the rhythmic accompaniment layer.
- Rhythmic guitar line provides accompaniment layer with the synthesised bass line and some intermittent synthesised chords, adding to the density. These instruments work together to provide an accompaniment layer.
- Handclaps provide additional rhythmic complexity.

Question 4

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains in detail how contrast is achieved in the excerpt through the use of tone colour Demonstrates a highly developed aural understanding, using well-supported observations and examples 	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains in some detail how contrast is achieved in the excerpt through the use of tone colour Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and examples 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains how contrast is achieved in the excerpt through the use of tone colour Demonstrates an aural understanding, using observations and examples 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a basic understanding of contrast and/or tone colour in the excerpt Demonstrates a basic aural understanding 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a limited aural understanding 	1

Answers could include:

- A range of acoustic, electronic and synthesised instrumental and vocal tone colours are heard in the excerpt which contribute to the contrast.
- Opening ‘swirls’ of synthesised sounds, created through adding reversed effects to the keyboards/strings opening soundscape, prior to the entry of bass guitar/female voice/cymbal ‘wash’.
- Bass guitar plays in a low register, doubling at the octave by electric guitar in Introduction/Verse 1.
- Female vocal 1 – alto voice with a breathy/feathery creates tone colour by the airy technique, singing softly at first, close to the microphone and employing small vocal slides between scale notes eg on *I could never live*.
- Contrast is created with post-production techniques (eg doubling, tuning, reverb, and low-level compressing effects) added to female voice 1; on the second line *but then I spent so many nights* changes the tone colour to be slightly richer as a result.
- Entry after first sung phrase, light metallic hi-hat ‘snaps’ on the back beat (accented beats 2 + 4; ghost note quavers) before contrasting to the dry, snare drum hits entry on beats 2, in Verse 1.
- Verse 2: Vocal tone colours are contrasted: Female vocal 2 – mezzo, clear and warm tone colour due to louder dynamic (*mf*), singing further back from the microphone, with more breath support. Tone colours are further contrasted with electric rhythm guitar comping patterns.
- End of Verse 2, contrast is achieved through close harmonies in vocals leading into the chorus, with the snare drum syncopated riff before moving to bright, accented crash cymbal on beat 1, then continuing quavers on crash rim, which slightly mutes the tone colour due to less resonance.
- Chorus *This life* (etc) creates contrast with the Introduction of ‘full’ and open synthesised sounds (keys) in doubled octaves to the electronic sounds heard in Introduction, Verse 1 and Verse 2.
- In the final two phrases of the chorus, the acoustic sounds of a violin (bright tone colour) are heard doubling the synthesiser.
- Vocalists sharing melodic role, and each has a different tone colour.

- Further instruments added at the climax section of the chorus and this addition of varied tone colours (eg synthesiser, violin) creates contrast.
- Multiple changes of instruments/performing media in each section of the excerpt creates contrast.
- The addition of a countermelody (eg violin and synthesiser in chorus) creates contrast; in addition to a varied register which affects the tone colour of the countermelody.

2022 HSC Music 1 Mapping Grid

Written Paper Core — Aural Skills

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
1	6	Australian music / Music of the 20th and 21st centuries (pitch)	H4, H6
2	8	Australian music / Music for large ensembles (repetition)	H4, H6
3	8	Australian music / Popular music (texture and structure)	H4, H6
4	8	Music for radio, film, television and multimedia / Popular music (contrast and tone colour)	H4, H6

Practical Examination Core — Performance

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
	20	Performance	H1, H2, H7

Practical Examination Elective — Composition / Musicology / Performance

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
	20	Composition	H2, H3, H5, H7
	20	Musicology	H2, H4, H5, H6, H7
	20	Performance	H1, H2, H7