

2023 HSC Music 1 Aural Skills

Marking Guidelines — Written Examination

Question 1

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

Sample answer:

The excerpt starts with a repeated, syncopated ostinato using body percussion. There is an uneven time signature. A female voice enters with the melody. This has a syncopated rhythm that is repeated. The body percussion layer continues as accompaniment. Each pattern is two bars long. The singing is replaced by beat boxing and more layers of body percussion, including clapping and foot stomps. This increases the rhythmic complexity. Most of the layers suddenly stop. The melody returns with the same rhythm as before. This is accompanied by sustained notes in the other voices. The original body percussion pattern returns. Lots of different vocal lines are introduced. Some of these are sustained notes, while some have syncopated rhythms. There are no lyrics. A male voice sings a melody. There are sustained notes and quick quaver runs in the accompaniment. There is a syncopated bass line introduced beneath this. The tempo stays the same throughout the excerpt. The excerpt ends with the addition of beatboxing.

Answers could include:

Opens with a single repeated rhythmic layer (5/4) Ostinato. Multiple people doing hand claps (+ soft finger clicks quavers) & foot stomps.



Above 2 bars repeated once. Syncopation in bar 2 (above). Foot stamp acts as an accent to mark the downbeat of the 5/4 bar; the quavers are maintained equally, without accents.

00'07"–0'19"

3 Female mid-range vocals enter with the melody follow a rhythm such as

, all singing in unison, against the body percussion rhythmic layer which is now the accompaniment layer. Each phrase is 2 bars long × 4.

0'20"–0'33"

Break from vocals; beat boxing with syncopated accents increases the rhythmic complexity against the initial 5/4 × 3 patters. 2 bars × 2. Then, heavy foot stamp on the metric accent (1) which signifies the increase rhythmic complexity with oscillating hand claps between performers, which combine to stream quavers over the 5/4 patterns of foot stamps and hand claps.

0'34"–0'44"

Sudden change in layers, as the original ostinato pattern with foot stamps/hand claps stops, with only a soft clicking of quavers quietly remaining. Only one single female voice singing the previous melodic idea is heard, starting with one single sustained drone/harmonic note, then three harmonic sustained notes accompany the vocals, before the final phrase of 4 phrase pattern is indicated with the other voices doubling the melody on the line *'first you reel me out, and then you cut the string'*. The rhythmic accompaniment layer stops to indicate the word painting of 'cut the string'.

0'45"–0'57"

Reintroduction of the 5/4 ostinato + sustained vocal harmonies. The sustained and moving vocal lines increase complexity and therefore textural density, and there are vocalised rhythmic patterns sung to 'scat' syllables when the pitch range is at the widest point, increasing textural density with the multiple accompaniment layers.

0'58"–1'11"

Reduction in layers to the rhythmic ostinato (feet/claps and clicks) with two male voices; one imitating the bass line, similar to a double bass (each note with a duration of five beats) and the other singing the melody. At the ends of phrases, the texture is increased with added accompaniment layers, with the female vocals 'answering' in quaver runs.

1'12"–1'49"

There is a rhythmic ostinato, against the male melody, and the male 'walking bass' layer

 or . A beat boxed 'snare' is added, before all layers simplify the rhythmic materials, with longer note values, sustained notes that gradually get softer, reducing the texture from variations in rhythm again to end the excerpt.

(0'42"–1'07") Verse 2

The bass is added at a lower register, playing quaver root notes to reinforce the chord progression. This develops rhythmic and textural interest. As the verse progresses, the same phrase structure repeats, but this time with the perfect cadence into the first bar of the chorus, developing harmonic interest.

(1'08"–1'39") Chorus

Vocal harmonics build as the chorus progresses, with three voices entering one after the other. This creates textural and harmonic interest. The chord progression is new for this section, affecting both pitch and structure. The singer uses a higher register, adding textural and timbral interest. Interest is further added by the sectionalisation of dynamic changes.

Question 3

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes in detail how texture has been used Demonstrates a highly developed aural understanding, using well-supported observations and appropriate examples 	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes in some detail how texture has been used Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and examples 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates an understanding of how texture has been used Demonstrates a competent aural understanding, using observations and examples 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a basic understanding of how texture has been used Demonstrates a basic aural understanding 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Answers could include:

Introduction: (0'00"–0'07")

- Single layer of sound (monophonic)
- Sustained drone on bowed horse-head fiddle; perfect 5th (in D).

A (0'07"–0'25")

- 2 layers of sound (2 horse-head fiddles); increased density
- Melodic ostinato on strummed horse-head fiddle (pedal point)
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(note: students may represent the lilting rhythm pattern as $\frac{4}{4}$)
- Ostinato breaks briefly from pedal point in last bar to have a more harmonic role, with descending pitch in contrary motion to main melodic line
- Melody played on bowed horse-head fiddle, with drone on lower string.

A1 (0'25"–0'41")

- Three layers (male vocals, two fiddles with different roles); increased density with additional voice
- Male voices in octaves humming the melodic line, tone colour interest in melodic line
- Strummed fiddle continues with melodic ostinato
- Bowed fiddle doubles melodic line with voices.

A2 (0'41"–0'58")

- 4 layers; increased density
- Male voices continue to hum melody
- Male throat singing added. Provides new whistling tone colour and pitch material (drone, 'Khoomei/Sygyt' technique)
- Melodic ostinato now bowed on fiddle – increased density of sound and change in tone colour.

A3 (0'58"–1'15")

- Drop in textural density – back to two layers (male vocals and harmonic ostinato on fiddle, homophonic texture)
- Voice now sings lyrics in Mongolian, creating new articulation
- Throat singing and bowed fiddle (sustained drone) drop out, creating a sparser texture
- Pedal point (in P5ths) on fiddle has a new articulation (tenuto on main beats), then new rhythm briefly in latter half of section: 

A4 (1'15"–1'30")

- Increased density & layers due to increased range
- Vocal melody changes to hum drone
- Fiddle takes over melodic line
- Throat singing enters in lower octave, singing a drone with open syllables ('Kargyra' technique)
- Melodic ostinato remains bowed.

Question 4

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes in detail how performing media is used to create contrast Demonstrates a highly developed aural understanding, using well supported observations and appropriate examples 	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes with some detail how performing media is used to create contrast Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and appropriate examples 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines how some performing media is used to create some contrast Demonstrates a competent aural understanding, using some observations 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies some performing media and/or contrast Demonstrates a basic aural understanding 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Answers could include:

Section 1 (0'00"–0'10")

- Unpitched low bass drum one hit, decays over 4 beats to begin the excerpt with male voices sounding 'nnng' (P5 apart), decrescendo, which contrasts to the tone colour
- Two duduks (Armenian double reed woodwind instrument, similar to a recorder) repeat the same two bar rhythm in harmony creating contrast
- Two different sized cymbals: brush/roll to create contrast in dynamics with crescendo and decrescendo (hairpin).

Section 2 (0'10"–0'21")

- Characterised by the entry of a drone, which is doubled in an octave (traditional vocal humming with non-traditional sound source of a vacuum-like/aerophone sound) and percussive elements [floor tom], accenting beat 2 and 4 which contrasts the low grumble of the soft quavers on the gong/tam tam, which crescendo through this section. There is a non-traditional sound undulating under this section also creating contrast.

Section 3 (0'21"–0'39")

- Characterised by the entry of male vocal singing the melody *come with me, catch a rare type specimen...* which is connected quavers, repeated notes, largely moving in steps, contrasted by the gentle, mellow, soft bass clarinet on beats 1 and 3 with staccato and light clarinet accompaniment on beats 2 and 4
- Each two-bar phrase has a bass clarinet fill, through a longer note, crescendo to beat 1 which features a hit on the timpani (octave lower pitch, dry 'bounce' sound), and creates contrast to the soft clarinet accompaniment, as it is more simplistic and a different tone colour
- At the end of the second repeat of the clarinet accompaniment, the male vocal leaps on the word *friends*, and the texture is reduced to vocal layer only, creating contrast briefly. The accompanying figure provides a new metallic, glistening tone colour, as the glockenspiel plays light ascending quavers (with a hard mallet) from beat 3; creating contrast in tone colour, structure and texture. The timpani enter on beat 4, and plays an accompanying contrary motion to the glockenspiel, creating contrast.

Section 4 (0'40"–0'58")

- Male vocals begin *shuts your ears*, stepwise pitch. The contrasting tone colours of mixed instruments accompany this melody (eg clarinets; trumpet; duduk) with no percussive layer
- Percussive snare drum layer enters with the *listen up* lead male vocals, creating contrast to the previous 4 bars
- End of this section has bass drum roll crescendo, creating contrast by dynamics of the performing media.

Section 5 (0'59"–1'15")

- Lead male vocal melody *come, come, come, come along now* are sung at a higher pitch, creating contrast to previous melodic material
- New male vocal line harmonises below the melody
- New performing media layers added: sticks tapping hand claps/snare rim rhythmic accompaniment (dry tone colour) creates contrast; double bass creates a fast-moving bass line
- Countermelody recorder/duduk sustained line also features a descending fill (diatonic/step wise) ornaments at the end of each phrase.

Section 6 (1'16"–1'40")

- Final contrast created by new performing media grouping; woodwind feature bass clarinet (accompaniment) flute, and oboe (doubled) play simple melodic musical material ending now in a major tonality.

2023 HSC Music 1 Mapping Grid

Written Paper
Core — Aural Skills

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
1	6	Duration	H4, H6
2	8	Interest and 2 concepts	H4, H6
3	8	Texture	H4, H6
4	8	Performing media and contrast	H4, H6, H7

Practical Examination
Core — Performance

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
	20	Performance	H1, H7

Practical Examination
Elective — Composition / Musicology / Performance

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
	20	Composition	H2, H3, H5, H7, H8
	20	Musicology	H2, H4, H5, H6, H8
	20	Performance	H1, H7