

# 2024 HSC Music 1 Aural Skills

## Marking Guidelines — Written Examination

### Question 1

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

#### **Sample answer:**

The excerpt is in verse-chorus form beginning with an introduction of a solo male voice singing a long note accompanied by didgeridoo and environmental sounds. A keyboard plays repeated chords and backing vocals sing 'woohs'. In verse 1 the male vocal has the melody with back-beat finger clicks. The keyboard, didgeridoo and backing vocals continue in the accompaniment. In the Pre-chorus the pitch material moves higher and the backing vocals now harmonise with the main vocal. Bass drum is added to the accompaniment. At 'let the river flow' the chorus begins with drums added to accompaniment. The main melody is harmonised for 'I can heal...' and 'I can feel...' but the line 'Love is round' has no harmony. After the chorus there is a bridge section where the main melody is repeated with the backing vocals providing a high pitch sustained accompaniment.

#### **Answers could include:**

Introduction: (0'00" – 0'20")

- Solo male voice, long sustained note with vibrato (B), accompanied by Yidaki/didgeridoo (E). Interval is a compound (P5) to begin (E–B).
- Unpitched/non-traditional sound sources of rain and birds.
- Repeated Major tonality riff on keyboard; each chord repeated twice, then pattern repeated.
- Softer male backing vocals 'wooa-oh-oh-oh' (B – A – D – B).
- As solo male voice moves higher in pitch, eventually reaching an octave higher (B), and more intense the backing vocals also move higher (G – F# – D – B).

Verse 1: (0'21" – 0'35")

- Solo male voice first/second line is centred around two notes (B–A) – limited range.
- Repeated chords keyboard pattern continues under the melody.
- Unpitched finger clicks on beat 2 and 4 are introduced.
- A produced backing vocal line answers at a higher range than the solo male voice.
- 3rd line is higher than previous; the last note of the third phrase rises to the 'E' heard in the Yidaki/Didgeridoo.
- 4th line creates dissonance, repeating the low 'A' ending on the 'B', creating resolution.

Pre-chorus: (0'36" – 0'50")

- Overall, pitch material starts higher than heard in verse 1.
- Heavy low produced bass drum unpitched sounds.
- Backing vocals harmonise the main melody sung by the male leader singer.
- There is a synthesised lift/rise throughout the pre-chorus.
- A repeated vocalisation/unpitched 'whoa' on each crotchet beat.
- Keyboard riff/comping continues under the lead vocals/back vocals.

Chorus: (0'51" – 1'06")

- 'Let the (E up a P5 to) river flow (B down a M2 to) a (A back up a M2/step) -gain (B)' sung by male voice.
- 'I can heal' – sung in harmony with upper notes by backing vocalists.
- 'Love is Round' – lead/backing vocals sing same melody; octave apart/doubled.
- 'I can feel' – sung in harmony with upper notes by backing vocalists, as heard before.
- These four lines are accompanied by synthesised and produced sounds.
- The last line is repeated, with drum track (unpitched) added.

Bridge/post-chorus: (1'07" – 1'22")

- High upper sustained male backing vocal.
- Limited range male melody repeated.
- Echoing of vocals at ends of phrases.
- Less textural density.
- Syncopated bass drum prominent in texture.

## Question 2

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains in detail how tension is created in the excerpt through the use of pitch and duration</li> <li>Demonstrates a highly developed understanding of tension using appropriate observations and examples</li> </ul>	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains in some detail how tension is created in the excerpt through the use of pitch and duration</li> <li>Demonstrates a developed understanding of tension using appropriate observations and examples</li> </ul>	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how tension is created in the excerpt through the use of pitch and/or duration</li> <li>Demonstrates some understanding of tension using observations and examples</li> </ul>	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a basic understanding of how tension is created in the excerpt through the use of pitch and/or duration</li> <li>Demonstrates a basic aural understanding</li> </ul>	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a limited aural understanding</li> </ul>	1

### **Answers could include:**

#### Pitch:

- Low pitched drone throughout in low strings, then high pitched drone/pedal point added in violins creating dissonance and tension. Slight tremolo evident in upper strings also creates tension.
- Minor tonality established with solo halldorophone\* (electric cello-like sound) playing a stepwise undulating melody creating tension. This is then extended to a simple and slow rising and falling melody line.
- High sustained violin octaves create tension as chords/harmonic progression changes.
- Further pitch variation later in excerpt with more instruments added playing contrasting melodic material which creates tension.
- Unexpected modulation marked by new rhythm pattern creates unease.

#### Duration:

- Excerpt opens with long-sustained sounds and no sense of pulse in lower and upper strings which tension is achieved through absence of pulse and sustained sound.
- Tension created by longer sustained synthesised sounds against shorter and higher string pitches.
- Tension is created by pulsating and resonant string instrument sounds (cello).
- Gradual introduction of a slow pulse with bass drum hits on the beat establishes 4/4 time. This slow introduction of pulse achieves a tense atmosphere.
- There is a gradual accelerando as the excerpt continues that creates tension.
- A new pattern is introduced halfway through the excerpt with percussion playing shorter notes against the bass drum (semiquavers against crotchet). This is repeated many times and accentuates the effect of the accelerando and creates tension.
- The contrast of short and long notes creates tension.
- Some use of abstract auxiliary percussion including woodblock heard at irregular intervals creates tension.

\* Students are not expected to know this instrument.

### Question 3

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains in detail how dynamics and expressive techniques have been used to create variety</li> <li>Demonstrates a highly developed aural understanding, using well-supported observations and appropriate examples</li> </ul>	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains in some detail how dynamics and expressive techniques have been used to create variety</li> <li>Demonstrates a developed aural understanding, using appropriate observations and examples</li> </ul>	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes an understanding of how dynamics and expressive techniques have been used to create variety</li> <li>Demonstrates a competent aural understanding, using observations and examples</li> </ul>	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a basic understanding of how dynamics and expressive techniques have been used to create variety</li> <li>Demonstrates a basic aural understanding</li> </ul>	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a limited aural understanding</li> </ul>	1

**Answers could include:**

- Different orchestral instruments are used to accompany the choir, showing variety of performing media using a variety of dynamic and expressive techniques.
- The excerpt begins with a soft sustained timpani roll and low sustained note from a trombone. The dynamics are quite soft (piano) with a long crescendo leading into the first choir entry. The double bass uses a punctuating pizzicato to create variety.
- The first choral entry features a commanding, fanfare-like idea from the tenors and basses, sung at a forte dynamic. This is accompanied by the timpani playing a contrasting pedal note, with some periods of rest in between iterations. This phrase is repeated three times with the addition of more voices (including altos/sopranos) to build the harmony and increases the dynamic level with each addition.
- When the voices sing, their flowing expressive phrases the lower brass and percussion accompany the voices, allowing for these dominant layers to be clearly heard. As the section continues, the texture becomes dense with voices and brass layers overlapping creating significant variety through intensifying the expression.
- Higher pitched brass instruments (trumpets) play loud dotted rhythmic figures (similar to choral parts) mainly between the vocal phrases, punctuating the text in a declamatory style.
- The repetition of text '*Gloria Patri*' is continued throughout the excerpt at varied dynamic levels, sometimes presented in a fragmented form eg just '*gloria*'. The text is presented in various registers and with different rhythmic treatments changing the expressive nature from lyrical to strong.
- After a quiet and more legato sustained passage, the voices re-enter singing '*Gloria Patri*' accompanied by gentle strings and harp. The voices then enter in canon. As the final voice part enters (sopranos), the dynamics begin to increase as the pitch also rises.
- The '*Gloria Patri*' phrase appears again in a fragmented form (with a gradual crescendo) often with vibrato until the resolution of the phrase at a very loud dynamic (fortissimo). This is supported by the gradual inclusion of brass and woodwind instruments playing tenuto and accented dotted rhythms similar to the first section, as well as a number of

rapid scalic flourishes (flutes) to add colour and variety to phrases. The crash cymbal heralds the climax of the phrase and is played once at a loud dynamic.

- Dynamic variation shifts across the full dynamic range throughout the excerpt. This is at times gradual.

## Question 4

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

### **Answers could include:**

Introduction: (0'00" – 0'13")

- Electric guitar plays a riff that has a slightly distorted tone colour.
- The texture begins thin (monophonic) before a melodic riff is played by a synthesised keyboard that has a twangy and slight shimmering tone colour which makes the texture thicker (homophonic).

Verse 1: (0'13" – 0'30")

- Drum kit enters playing a driving rhythmic pattern that uses open and closed hi-hats with a metallic tone colour.
- Female vocal is singing the melody with a 'rock' and slightly raspy tone colour.
- There is an echo on the words 'home' and 'own'.
- A further layer is heard when 'no more' is repeated in an electronically modified way (auto tuned) and also has a slight echo as it descends.

Pre-chorus: (0'30" – 0'39")

- The kick drum, second electric guitar and bass guitar enter with accented notes on beat 1 of the bar, thickening the texture.
- The kick drum tone colour has a deep thud while the electric guitar has a distorted tone colour as it strums power chords.
- The bass guitar is low and booming while the original guitar riff rhythm is used but it then follows the chord progression in this section as it plays with a clearer, crisper tone colour.
- The texture is fuller in this section, then there is a drop in texture after the word 'clouds' when a snare drum fill with a slightly synthesised tone colour occurs before the next section.

Chorus: (0'39" – 1'14")

- The texture remains homophonic in this section with the lead female vocal singing the melody with the same raspy tone colour.
- The drum kit provides a 16/8 pattern on the hi-hats, that uses both open and closed technique. It now has the syncopated kick-drum pattern at the same time, with the contrasting booming tone colour from the kick drum against the metallic hi-hat.
- The bass guitar and electric guitars provide a harmonic and rhythmic role in this section.
- The texture thickens again when the female backing vocals enter with '*Don't need to be loved by you*' in harmony with a bright, clear tone colour.
- In the second half of the chorus a different female lead vocal enters with a raspy tone singing, '*Just like the white winged dove*'.
- The syncopated kick drum rhythm continues with drum fills on the tom-toms, which have a hollow tone colour, at the end of the phrase.
- Vocal Harmonies are more prominent in this section eg '*sings a song, sounds like she's singing*' and on the vocal '*ooh's*' with bright and echoey tone colour.
- The original female lead vocal ends the section with a high pitched '*loved by you*'.

Short interlude: (1'14" – 1'22")

- The texture is thinner with less performing media.
- The original electric guitar riff returns with its slightly distorted sound as does the keyboard synthesised from the introduction.
- Bass guitar and kick drum are more prominent as they combine to play the syncopated pattern again.
- Female vocal returns, thickening the texture, with shorter '*la, la, la, la*' before the word '*midnight*' is sustained with an echoey, rich tone colour.

Verse 2: (1'22" – 1'43")

- At the beginning of verse 2 the texture is thinner as the drum kit and second electric guitar have dropped out.
- Female voice still has the melody with harmonies sung on '*web that is my own*' with the other female lead vocal.
- The texture is thicker when the female back-up vocalists sing '*everything stopped*' in close harmony before '*nothing else mattered*' is also repeated in harmony.
- The excerpt ends with lead female vocals that has been sampled (auto-tuned) on the words '*no more*'.

# 2024 HSC Music 1 Mapping Grid

## Written Paper Core — Aural Skills

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
1	6	Structure (Australian music, Music of a culture)	H4, H6
2	8	Tension, pitch and duration (Music for radio, film, television and multimedia; Music of the 20th and 21st centuries)	H4, H6
3	8	Dynamics and expressive techniques (Music for large ensembles, Music and religion)	H4, H6
4	8	Texture and tone colour (Rock music, Technology and its influence on music)	H4, H6

## 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, H3, H5, H7, H8
	20	Performance	H1, H7