

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCE
in Music Technology
6MT02 Listening and Analysing

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General Introduction

Pearson was swift to acknowledge issues arising from the issue of faulty CD's produced in mono. It was ascertained that only two questions would be affected; 2(c) and 5(a). These marks, six in total, will be discounted, and the resultant grade will be calculated out of seventy-four marks rather than eighty. This will not disadvantage any candidate.

Candidates were generally well-prepared by centres regarding the special focus styles, with many candidates scoring highly.

As always, candidates who had a substantial knowledge of both musical and technological topics, along with appropriate vocabulary, were the most successful.

Fewer candidates are using extra sheets to record their responses. Those who did rarely gained additional marks, and had often achieved full marks in the space allocated.

Candidates are reminded of the importance of legible handwriting, as marks may be lost if the answer cannot be read.

Specific questions

1(a) Generally well-answered with many candidates achieving full marks. "Brass Section" was a very common response which did not receive credit.

1(b) Few candidates were able to identify a vibraphone.

1(c) Most candidates were able to identify a condenser as the correct microphone. Candidates are reminded to think about the direction of the mic and the distance from the instrument. Many candidates referred to placing a mic under the lid or inside the piano yet failed to specify that the lid should be open. From the responses it also seemed that many candidates were referring to an upright piano rather than a grand piano.

1(d) Most candidates recognised that a synth was the most likely solution, with some understanding that sampling was also, historically an option. The most knowledgeable candidates mentioned either waveforms/synthesis techniques, or an appropriate synth.

2(b) Most candidates found the correct answer, although 'Call and response' was a popular wrong answer.

2(e)(i) Most candidates understood the technique of editing a reverb tail by reversing it.

2(e)(ii) This was generally not well answered. The question was about reversing

the reverb, not reversing the snare. A fair number of candidates were aware that reversing tape was involved in the process in 1972 but, again, most candidates spoke of reversing the snare.

3(e) Not all candidates read the question correctly. Often, they did not give ways in which these problems could have been avoided using modern equipment.

3(f) Few candidates identified the compound metre.

4(c) Many candidates identified this as a string ensemble. Others identified it as a keyboard sound or pad.

4(d) Very few candidates had the music technology vocabulary to answer this question correctly.

4(e) This was generally well-answered in terms of parts one and two. Many candidates claimed that a pop shield would prevent sibilance. There was also the assumption that a small room cannot be reverberant.

4(f) This was generally well-answered, with most candidates finding appropriate responses.

5(b)(i) With a wide range of answers to choose from, most candidates scored well here.

5(b)(ii) Again, generally well-handled. Some candidates mentioned the slashing of cones. This would not have resulted in the sound heard on the recording.

5(c) Candidates who spoke of the recording of the drums generally fared well. Those who discussed issues regarding the mix and production values did less well. Candidates are advised to focus on the wording of the question.

5(d) Many top candidates gave an ' F' for the third note, but failed to make it an F Natural.

5(f) A large majority of candidates opted to write about Led Zeppelin. There was often mention of the Blues and Folk roots. Those who wrote about Deep Purple tended to fare less well. For both bands, the mention of Blues, distorted guitars, riffs, and a chosen song or album resulted in good marks. There was clearly some good preparation by centres.

6(c) Candidates who have a sound understanding of technology did well on this question. There were many responses that alluded to reverb and compression.

6(f) Many candidates did not have enough understanding of music technology, and of FX in particular, to answer this question fully. Most candidates managed to say something creditworthy, but few managed a full three marks.

6(g) Many candidates offered vague answers to this question, failing to notice the lo-fi quality of the piano sound, the vinyl crackle etc.

6(h) The most common answer was by far Bob Marley, with responses for King Tubby and Lee “ Scratch” Perry divided fairly equally. Many candidates narrowly missed marks for identifying “ the Wailers” yet not stating that Marley “ fronted” the band. Many candidates scored well, however, with references to his worldwide popularity, Rastafarianism and his political lyrics. References to the other two artists were less well-defined, where candidates showed an understanding of Dub generally, but not of these artists’ specific contribution to reggae.

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