Captivate
EDUCATION

SAMPLE QUESTIONS
One question from each section of this exam, with its marking scheme, so teachers can see what the full paper is like. Full exam and solutions: captivateeducation.com.au/trial-exams

Music Contemporary Performance

Question and Answer Book

Practice examination 1 – 2027

- Reading time is 15 minutes
- Writing time is 1 hour

Materials supplied

- Question and Answer Book, including blank manuscript for rough work
- An audio recording of musical excerpts for Sections A and B (prepared by your teacher)

Instructions

- Use the additional space at the end of this book if you need extra space to complete an answer.
- All your work, including rough work, will be considered for assessment.
- You may write at any time during the playing of the audio recording.

Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Contents

Section A (2 questions, 20 marks)

Section B (9 questions, 40 marks)

Blank manuscript for rough work if required

Practice material in the layout of the 2025 VCAA paper – generated 2027. Not a VCAA examination.

SAMPLE

Section A – Listening and interpretation

Instructions

- Answer **all** questions in pen or pencil in the spaces provided.
- Write your responses in English.

SAMPLE

- An audio recording will play continuously throughout Section A.

Sample – Question 1 of the 2 questions in this section.

Question 1 (8 marks)

Work: ‘Dance Monkey’

Composers/Creators: Toni Watson

Performers: Tones and I

Album: *The Kids Are Coming* (Bad Batch, 2019)

The excerpt will be played four times. There will be silent working time after each playing.

First playing (1′20″) – 30 seconds of silence

Second playing (1′20″) – 1 minute of silence

a. Describe how the performers use **tone colour** and **texture** to create musical character. 4 marks

Third playing (1′20″) – 1 minute of silence

Fourth and final playing (1′20″) – 2 minutes of silence

SAMPLE

b. Describe the use of **repetition** and **contrast** within this excerpt. 4 marks

SAMPLE

Section B – Music language

Instructions

- Answer **all** questions in pen or pencil in the spaces provided.
- Write your responses in English.
- An audio recording will play continuously throughout Section B.

Sample – Question 3 of the 9 questions in this section.

Question 3 (4 marks)

Listen to the following two intervals. Each interval may be played harmonically and/or melodically, ascending and/or descending.

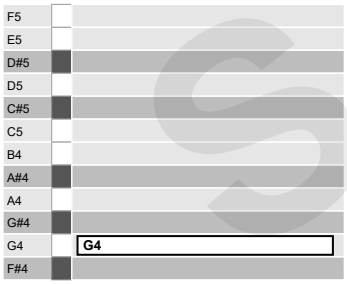
First playing – 5 seconds of silence
Second and final playing – 5 seconds of silence

a. Identify the size and the quality of each interval. 2 marks

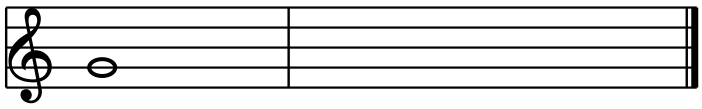
1. _____
2. _____

b. Document the following intervals by **either** writing the letter names on the DAW graph **or** drawing the notes on the staff. You will now have one minute to complete **part b**. 2 marks

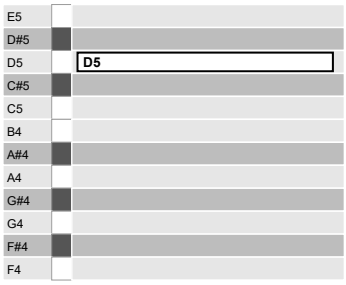
1. Major 6th above G given



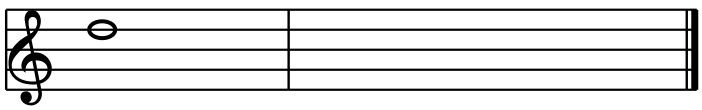
OR



2. Perfect 4th **below** D given



OR



SAMPLE

End of sample questions

SAMPLE

Blank manuscript for rough work if required

SAMPLE

Marking scheme for the sample questions

Section A

Question 1a. (4 marks)

*Describe how the performers use **tone colour** and **texture** to create musical character.*

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

Audio the teacher must supply for the whole paper (assemble one continuous file in this order, inserting the silences printed on the paper)

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Track	Question	Audio	Playings
1	1	‘Dance Monkey’, Tones and I, *The Kids Are Coming* (Bad Batch, 2019) — approximately 0:00–1:20 (first verse to the end of the first chorus); confirm against your copy	4 (30 seconds, 1 minute, 1 minute, 2 minutes)
2	2 (A)	‘Somebody That I Used to Know’, Gotye featuring Kimbra, *Making Mirrors* (2011) — approximately 0:00–1:40	3, alternating with B
3	2 (B)	‘Somebody That I Used to Know’, Walk off the Earth, *R.E.V.O.* (2013) — approximately 0:00–1:40	3, alternating with A (silences 30 seconds, 1 minute, 30 seconds, 2 minutes, 1 minute, 2 minutes 30 seconds)
4	3a	Recorded: two intervals on acoustic piano — F4–A4, C5–D4	2 (5 s, 5 s)
5	4	Recorded: four scales/modes on electric piano — D dorian, G major pentatonic, E phrygian, A blues	2 (5 s, 5 s)
6	5	Recorded: six-bar work for electric guitar, electric bass and drum kit — invented melody (recipe in the Question 5 specification)	6
7	6	Recorded: four chords on electric piano — F major seventh, D minor, C dominant seventh, E power chord	2 (5 s, 5 s)
8	7	Recorded: C major at 92 bpm, piano in root-position block chords on each beat with electric bass on the roots, one bar per chord: C – Am – F – G – C (I–vi–IV–V–I)	3 (5 s, 5 s, 15 s)
9	8	No audio — two minutes of silence	—
10	9	Recorded: Snare drum in 6/8 at 60 dotted-crotchet beats per minute over a kick drum on each dotted-crotchet beat; play fragments E, A, F, C in bars 1–4 exactly as notated in the answer figure	5
11	10	Recorded: two drum-kit grooves — shuffle then straight 8ths	2 (10 s, 10 s)
12	11	Recorded: four-bar excerpt for voice, acoustic guitar, electric bass and drum kit — invented melody and lyrics (recipe in the Question 11 specification)	6

Describe how the performers use both tone colour and texture to create musical character, naming the character and linking each element to it with examples that can be heard.

SAMPLE

Audio specification — Question 1. Work: ‘Dance Monkey’; Composers/Creators: Toni Watson; Performers: Tones and I; Album: *The Kids Are Coming* (Bad Batch, 2019). Play approximately 0:00–1:20 of the original recording (duration about 1′20″): the first verse, the build and the first chorus with its repeated ‘dance for me’ hook. What the student must be able to hear: the distinctive high, nasal lead vocal; the sparse keyboard-and-percussion verse; the added bass, drums and backing vocals in the chorus; the repeated hook and chord loop. Confirm the timing against your copy and adjust the playing lengths on the paper if your edit differs; check each point in the point banks against the recording and delete any you cannot hear before marking. Source the track from a legal copy (the school's licensed library or a purchased download).

Common errors included writing only about the voice (tone colour) and not texture, describing texture only as ‘thick’ or ‘thin’ without the roles of the instruments and voice, and naming a character without linking it to anything heard.

Mark allocation: This question was marked holistically against the following descriptors. **High (4):** a detailed and coherent description of how both tone colour and texture create a clearly identified musical character, with a variety of highly relevant and detailed examples from the excerpt and highly relevant music terminology and language. **Mid (2–3):** a basic and simplistic description, or one of the two treated in detail and the other briefly, with some relevant examples and generally appropriate terminology. **Low (1):** a partial or unclear description with very few examples of limited relevance.

Responses could have included:

- Character: playful, quirky, cheeky, bouncy, insistent; a sense of performance and showmanship.
- Tone colour — vocal: a distinctive high, nasal, slightly raspy female voice; idiosyncratic vocal inflections, scoops and clipped word endings; the voice placed close and dry at the front of the mix, which makes the delivery feel personal and slightly mischievous.
- Tone colour — instrumental: bright, percussive keyboard chords; snapping or clapping percussion; a rounded synthesised bass that thickens the sound in the chorus; electronic (programmed) drum sounds rather than an acoustic kit.
- Texture: a sparse verse — voice over a light keyboard and percussion accompaniment (melody and accompaniment) — leaves space for the quirky vocal to dominate; layers are added towards and in the chorus (fuller drums, bass, backing vocals doubling or answering the hook), producing a denser, more energetic and insistent character.
- Texture: the hook ‘dance for me’ sits on top of a repeating accompaniment pattern, so the voice always leads and the accompaniment supports — the clear melody-and-accompaniment texture keeps the character light and catchy rather than heavy.

Sample full-mark response

> Character: playful, quirky, insistent
> Tone colour: high, nasal, raspy vocal with scoops + clipped endings = cheeky, quirky; voice dry + upfront so it sounds like she is teasing the listener
> Bright percussive keys + claps/snaps = bouncy, light
> Texture: verse sparse — voice over light keys + percussion (melody + accompaniment) so the quirky vocal stands out

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> Chorus: drums, synth bass + backing vocals added = denser, more energetic, the hook becomes insistent

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Question 1b. (4 marks)

*Describe the use of **repetition** and **contrast** within this excerpt.*

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

Describe the use of both repetition and contrast within the excerpt, with specific, aurally discernible examples.

Common errors included describing only repetition, and naming a device without an example (‘the song is repetitive’).

Mark allocation: This question was marked holistically against the following descriptors. **High (4):** a detailed and coherent description of the use of both repetition and contrast, with a variety of highly relevant and detailed examples from the excerpt and highly relevant music terminology and language. **Mid (2–3):** a basic and simplistic description, or one of the two treated in detail and the other briefly, with some relevant examples and generally appropriate terminology. **Low (1):** a partial or unclear description with very few examples of limited relevance.

Responses could have included:

- Repetition: a short chord progression loops throughout the excerpt; the repeated keyboard and percussion pattern underpins the verse; the hook ‘dance for me, dance for me, dance for me’ repeats the same short melodic and rhythmic cell three times in succession; the steady, unchanging tempo and pulse.
- Repetition: lines of the verse reuse the same melodic shape and rhythm with new words; the backbeat pattern repeats bar after bar.
- Contrast: the restrained, sparsely accompanied verse against the fuller, louder chorus; the vocal moving into a higher, more forceful register in the chorus; the entry of the bass and fuller drums marking the new section; changes in the vocal delivery from conversational to insistent.
- Contrast within repetition: the same chord loop continues while the texture and dynamic level change around it, so the contrast comes from arrangement rather than new harmony.

Sample full-mark response

> Repetition: same short chord loop throughout
> Hook ‘dance for me’ ×3 = same rhythmic/melodic cell repeated
> Keys + percussion pattern repeats every bar in the verse; backbeat constant
> Contrast: verse sparse + softer vs chorus louder with bass + fuller drums
> Vocal higher + more forceful in chorus vs conversational verse
> Loop stays the same but the arrangement changes = contrast through texture/dynamics

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Section B

Question 3a. (2 marks)

Identify the size and the quality of each interval.

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

Identify the size and the quality of each interval.

Answer: 1. major third 2. minor seventh

> **Audio specification — Question 3.** Acoustic piano, medium tempo. 1. F4 then A4, melodically ascending (two crotchets at 80 bpm), then together as a minim. 2. C5 then D4, melodically descending, then together as a minim. Two playings of the pair, 5 seconds of silence after each. Part b has no audio: one minute of silence.

Common errors included giving the size without the quality, and confusing major and minor qualities of the same size.

Mark allocation: 1 mark per interval; both size and quality were required. "M3" or "m7" was not accepted — write "major" or "minor" in full.

Sample full-mark response

> 1. major third 2. minor seventh

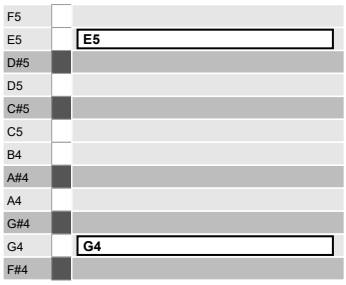
Question 3b. (2 marks)

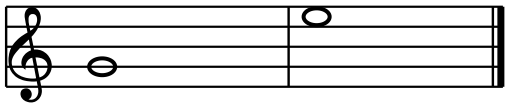
*Document the following intervals by **either** writing the letter names on the DAW graph **or** drawing the notes on the staff. You will now have one minute to complete **part b**.*

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

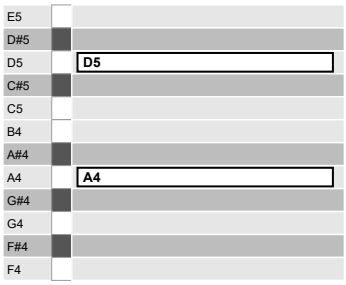
Document each interval by either writing the letter name on the DAW graph or drawing the note on the staff, in the correct register.

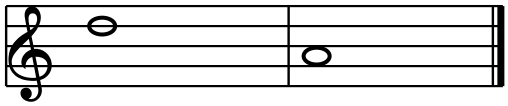
Answer: 1. E (E5 – a major sixth above G4) 2. A (A4 – a perfect fourth below D5)





SAMPLE





Common errors included counting the interval from the wrong end (above instead of below), writing the note an octave out on the DAW graph, and omitting a needed accidental.

Mark allocation: 1 mark per interval; the note had to be in the correct register and, on the staff, clearly on a line or in a space. If both the DAW graph and the staff were used, only the first response was assessed.

Sample full-mark response

> 1. E 2. A

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