National
Qualifications
2026

2026 Music Technology

Higher

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

These marking instructions have been prepared by examination teams for use by Qualifications Scotland appointed markers when marking external course assessments.

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General marking principles for Higher Music Technology

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

(a) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.

(b) Do not accept any answer that is not in the marking instructions. Use professional judgement when candidates' responses do not exactly match the marking instructions but carry the same meaning.

(c) Accept inaccurate spelling of English or Italian terms, as long as the meaning is clear.

(d) Where a question asks for a description, explanation or justification, do not award marks for simple one or two word answers.

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Marking instructions for each question

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
1.	(a)		Indie Inverted pedal	**2**	**1 mark** for each correct answer. No other answers accepted here.
	(b)		• electric guitar is the main harmonic instrument • extensive use of reverb on vocals • live sounding recording • lo-fi recording • overdrive **or** distortion on electric guitar • reverb on electric guitar • simple chord structure • unpolished vocals	**2**	**1 mark** for each correct answer. Electric guitar on its own is acceptable. Do not accept overdrive, distortion or reverb on their own. Also accept anything that infers a live sounding vocal.
2.	(a)		Soul • backing vocals • electronic organ • emotive vocal delivery • horn **or** rhythm section • ostinato **or** riff • prominent bass line • syncopation	**3**	**1 mark** for correct genre. **2 marks** for features. Also accept Hammond organ. Also accept brass **or** saxophone(s) **or** tumpet(s). Also accept call and response.
	(b)		Phaser	**1**	Do not accept other answers here.
3.	(a)	(i)	Spillage	**1**	**1 mark** for a description of the fault. Also accept any inference to the unwanted audio capture of background noise.
		(ii)	Turn down headphone monitoring level. **or** Use closed headphones. **or** If the performer is using one headphone, pan monitoring to the desired side.	**1**	**1 mark** for a detailed description of a matching correction. Also accept any inference to cancelling out unwanted audio. Also accept use of noise gate
	(b)	(i)	Unbalanced mix.	**1**	**1 mark** for a description of the fault. Also accept any inference to the poor balance of parts (for example, presenter is too quiet).
		(ii)	Balance the levels correctly.	**1**	**1 mark** for a detailed description of a matching correction. Also accept any inference to the correction of the mix balance.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
4.	(a)		Delay setting 2**.** Time and feedback controls are increased.	**1**	Do not accept other answers here.
	(b)		Tremolo	**1**	Do not accept other answers here.
	(c)		Decay Depth Diffusion Gate time Pre-delay (Room) size Time Width	**2**	Accept any **two** answers. Do not accept reverb types, eg, spring, plate, digital. Do not accept room types, eg, cathedral or hall.
5.	(a)		Melody	**1**	Also accept electric guitar riff.
	(b)		• obtain permission to use melodic aspects of excerpt 1 • give a writing **or** publishing credit **or** pay royalties to INXS • significantly change the melody	**2**	**1 mark** for each correct answer. Do not accept other answers here.
6.	(a)		R 'n' B Samples	**2**	**1 mark** for each correct answer.
	(b)		Dynamic microphones with cardioid polar pattern. Distance up to 10 centimetres from the skin of the bass and snare drums. To minimise spillage or bleed.	**3**	**1 mark** for microphone type and polar pattern. **1 mark** for placement. Accept responses which infer close mic'ing of bass and snare drums. **1 mark** for justification. Also accept the use of dynamic microphones to capture higher sound pressure levels (SPLs).

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Question</th><th>Expected response</th><th>Max mark</th><th>Additional guidance</th></tr>
<tr><td>7.</td><td></td><td></td><td>Examples of responses:

Virtual instruments
<table><tr><td>Features</td><td>• accurately recreates the sound of an instrument
• allows composers/sound engineers to use the sound of an instrument without having to record it
• can be programmed
• performance can be edited
• sound of instrument can be manipulated
• can be quantised
• can be controlled using MIDI</td></tr><tr><td>Innovators</td><td>• Rebirth
• (Steinberg) Cubase
• Ableton</td></tr><tr><td>Genre</td><td>• dance music</td></tr></table>Guitar pickup
<table><tr><td>Features</td><td>• (vibration of) strings are picked up by a magnet
• (vibration of) strings are converted to an electrical signal
• allows the sound of the guitar to be amplified
• allows effects to be applied to guitar
• guitar can be DI’d
• background noise does not need to be considered when recording</td></tr><tr><td>Innovators</td><td>• Beauchamp
• Fender
• Gibson
• Rickenbacker
• Seth Lover</td></tr><tr><td>Genre</td><td>• blues
• indie
• new wave
• rock
• rock ‘n’ roll
• punk</td></tr></table></td><td>4</td><td>Do not award marks for only selecting a technological development from the list provided.

1 mark per feature to a maximum of 2 marks.

1 mark for innovator.

1 mark for genre.</td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Question</th><th>Expected response</th><th>Max mark</th><th>Additional guidance</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Sampler<table><tr><td>Features</td><td>• records short excerpts of sound called samples
• plays back samples (‘triggering’)
• can reverse samples
• can pitch samples up or down
• can apply envelopes to a sample
• can apply filters to a sample
• can time compress a sample
• can time expand a sample</td></tr><tr><td>Innovators</td><td>• Akai
• Chamberlin
• Computer Music
• E-mu
• Fairlight
• Harry Mendell
• Synclavier</td></tr><tr><td>Genre</td><td>• Dance music
• Hip hop
• R ‘n’ B</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>8.</td><td></td><td>1.</td><td>1. Low
2. Vibrato</td><td>2</td><td>1 mark for each correct answer.
1. Do not accept other answers here.
2. Also accept chorus.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>2.</td><td>Sample</td><td>1</td><td>Do not accept other answers here.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>3.</td><td>Time expansion</td><td>1</td><td>Do not accept other answers here.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>4.</td><td>Panning</td><td>1</td><td>Also accept autopan.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>5.</td><td>Atonal</td><td>1</td><td>Do not accept other answers here.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>6.</td><td>Electroacoustic</td><td>1</td><td>Do not accept other answers here.</td></tr>
<tr><td>9.</td><td></td><td></td><td>• electric piano and synth bass play ascending riff
• harmonicas panned left and right
• hi-hat plays swing rhythm
• synth bass plays repeated pedal note
• vocals sing descending chromatic pattern</td><td>5</td><td>1 mark for each correct feature.
Features can be listed in any order.
Do not accept other answers here.</td></tr>
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END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]