

Component 3

AS LEVEL AND A LEVEL

The questions that follow are written to help you prepare for both levels of the course. Question numbers with an * next to them indicate that you need to be able to answer them for both AS and A Level. Those without an * are for A Level only.

Practice Paper 1

SECTION A

Answer ALL questions.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

Question 1

Track 1 – Ultravox: ‘Vienna’ (1981)

- *a. The sound of the snare drum on this recording is quite characteristic of 1980s production. Describe three features of the production of the snare drum before 1’20”. (3)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- *b. Despite being recorded in the 1980s, this track uses a variety of 1970s analogue synthesisers and drum machines. Describe the challenges when working with 1970s analogue synthesisers in a live situation compared to a software synthesiser on a DAW. (3)

- *c. Identify an appropriate time in seconds for a vocal reverb, as used on this recording from 0’56”. (1)

Reverb time (s)	
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- *d. Describe how you would recreate the sound audible between 1’16” and 1’21” using:
i. Modern DAW technology. (1)

- ii. Analogue technology/tape. (2)

Total for AS Level: 10 marks/Total for A Level: 10 marks

Question 2

Track 2 – The Beatles: ‘In My Life’ (1965)

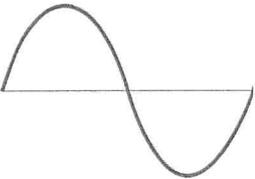
***a.** Identify two features of the production of this track that show it was produced in the 1960s. (2)

1. _____
2. _____

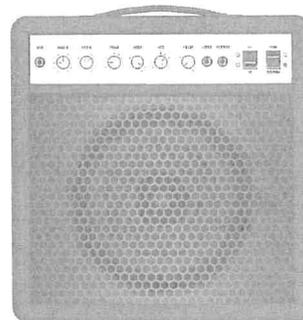
b. The electric guitar on this recording is slightly distorted.

***i.** Describe two different ways distortion could have been produced in the 1960s. (2)

ii. Draw a distorted version of the clean wave shown below. (1)

Clean	Distorted
	

c. The electric guitar in the opening of this track was recorded using a microphone. Draw a cross to identify where you would place the microphone on the speaker to create the brightest guitar sound.



(1)

d. Doubletracking is used in this track to thicken the lead vocal. Explain how automatic doubletracking (ADT) could be achieved using DAW technology today. (4)

Total for AS Level: 4 marks/Total for A Level: 10 marks

Question 3

Track 3 - Billie Holiday: 'On The Sunny Side Of The Street' (1944)

- *a. The vocal part in this recording is significantly louder than the other parts in the mix. Suggest two ways this could have been achieved in the 1940s when this track was recorded.

(2)

1. _____
2. _____

- *b. A student wishes to re-record the lead vocal of this track to modern standards. They have chosen a condenser microphone in order to do so. Explain three reasons why the student might have made this choice.

(6)

- *c. Due to limitations in the technology of the time, there are some problems with the capture in this recording. Two of the issues are given in the table below. State how the issues could be avoided if re-recording the track using modern equipment.

(2)

Problem with the capture	How could it be avoided?
Piano sounds muddy	
Drums are not well balanced	

Total for AS Level: 10 marks/Total for A Level: 10 marks

Question 4**Track 4 - Galantis: 'Runaway (U&I)' (2014)**

- *a.** Describe how the vocal parts have been processed to maintain interest between 0'35" and 1'11" in this track.

(4)

- *b.** Aside from dynamic processing, describe three processes the engineer might have used on this track during mastering.

(3)

1.

2.

3.

- c.** Describe how compression has been used to add interest to the synth pads between 1'07" and 1'36".

(3)

Total for AS Level: 7 marks/Total for A Level: 10 marks

Total for AS Level Section A: 31 marks/Total for A Level Section A: 40 marks

