

## Manchester independent local radio licence applications

# Questions and responses: Original 98FM

*These are the responses received from Original 98FM to the non-confidential questions asked by Ofcom regarding its application for the Manchester licence.*

**1. In relation to the Music Survey, you suggest that the sample of 250 respondents consisted of an equal split of 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59 year olds, with equal numbers of men and women, and of ABC1/C2DE respondents. Can you clarify how this sample breakdown compares with the actual profile of 30-59 year olds in the sample area?**

The following chart summarises the achieved sample and “actual” profile. The “actual” profile is based on the age and sex profile projected by CACI for 2006 across the proposed TSA and the class profile is taken from Galaxy RAJAR Q3 2004.

	Men	Wome n	ABC1	C2DE	30-39	40-49	50-59
Achieved	49%	51%	55%	45%	37%	30%	33%
Actual	50%	50%	51%	49%	36%	35%	29%

We have reviewed both weighted and unweighted data, and as weighting factors are generally low, there was no significant variation and therefore the conclusions summarised in the application are not affected.

**2. Given the plan to play a preponderance of tracks that were not hit singles, in testing artists as part of the research, were any individual songs named or played for respondents? Was interest in less-often played album tracks specifically tested in any other way?**

Individual songs, including less-often played album tracks, were played to respondents in two of our research projects. In order to test our proposed format effectively we constructed a music montage that was fully representative of a typical hour on Original 98FM. The montage contained 12 tracks and was in line with our format promise to avoid obvious Top 20 songs and to contain a maximum of 25% Top 20 (this in comparison with the 82% average Top 20 content currently found on ILR in Manchester). The music montage:-

was varied by genre

was varied by era

was based on credible artists, with an adult focus

and had limited Top 20 content

The montage was used in both our quantitative music survey and in our qualitative focus groups. The tracks played were:-

Song	Artist	Top 20	Genre	Era
Sunday Morning	Maroon 5	no	Mellow	00s
Changes	David Bowie	no	Eclectic	70s
Days Like This	Van Morrison	no	Mellow	90s
Think	Aretha Franklin	no	Soul/R&B/Blues	60s
Babylon	David Gray	yes	Rock	90s
Stand	REM	no	Rock	90s
New England	Kirsty MacColl	yes	Eclectic	80s
While You See A Chance	Steve Winwood	no	Rock	80s
Can't Stop Now	Keane	no	Rock	00s
Knocking On Heaven's Door	Eric Clapton	no	Soul/R&B/Blues	70s
Under My Thumb	Rolling Stones	no	Rock	60s
White Flag	Dido	yes	Mellow	00s

Of the 12 tracks researched, 10 were not being played on ILR during our week long monitoring. The two tracks that were played on ILR were unsurprisingly from the Top 20 namely David Gray's Babylon and Dido's White Flag.

Furthermore, there are a number of supportive indicators of strong interest in album tracks including:-

The most popular format in our quantitative survey was the "... credible mix of hits and album tracks from a wide range of adult artistes for the over 30s...." which clearly identified album tracks as a key component of the format.

The "Album Chart Show" attracted the highest level of "definitely want" amongst 30-59 year olds in our quantitative survey.

The British record buying public have an undeniable and increasing interest in album tracks and a well documented decreasing interest in singles. The most comprehensive research available - that of the returns from music stores of actual purchases - bears this out, with album sales outstripping singles sales by a factor of 50 to 1.

The first "combined chart" included both physical and downloaded singles. Just 33,000 of the 383,000 downloads in that week were from the Top 20 – less than 10% of all downloads. In other words 350,000 downloads were not of the current Top 20 with substantial interest in album tracks evident.

**3. Please provide the 30-59 year olds' responses to Q10 of the Main Quantitative survey.**

Please see attached table, submitted in confidence.

**4. Please can you provide a clear definition of what for your purposes will constitute an 'album track', as mentioned in the Format commitment to play predominantly album tracks? (For example, are tracks that have been released as singles excluded from this category?)**

Our definition of an album track is “any track featured on an album that has not achieved Top 20 chart status”.

We are well aware that the term “album track” is open to interpretation, as invariably most singles are included on albums. However, our clearly stated intention throughout our application is to play music for adults that is currently excluded from Manchester stations. With four out of five tracks on ILR being Top 20 chart hits, it means that the majority of songs that have not enjoyed singles chart success equally do not enjoy ILR exposure. Our mission is to avoid the obvious “pop” focus of ILR. It matters not to us if an album track was released as a single and got into the outer reaches of the Top 40, Top 75 or Top 100. When singles don't achieve Top 20 success they are unlikely to feature on ILR, and this means a wealth of material is being passed over. There is confusion looming over the definition of a “single”. Until recently consumers could only buy a “single” track when a record company had decided to release it. Download companies (itunes, Napster etc.) now offer all tracks available as single downloads and their statistics identify singles as the downloading of individual tracks, whether or not they have been released as traditional physical singles. This potentially renders a “format definition” incorporating the term “single” redundant.

Categorising music by chart position is (along with date) the most unambiguous way of defining musical distinction. It is clear and not open to misinterpretation, unlike any genre or mood based definitions.

Our definition guarantees our commitment to distinctiveness relative to existing ILR output, which comprises 82% Top 20 tracks.