

GCE



Chief Examiner's Report
Music

Summer Series 2018



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Education (GCE) in Music for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCE MUSIC

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 1 & A2 1 Performance

The new specification has resulted in some subtle changes which candidates and teachers should bear in mind when preparing.

It is no longer possible to gain full marks without actually being awarded full marks. Previously candidates who offered music at a high grade could score a mark slightly less than full marks and receive an enhanced mark which took them to the top of the mark band. This led to a large number of candidates receiving full marks and a considerable bunching of marks at the upper end. The new specification allows for greater discrimination between the good and the excellent, without penalising the weaker candidates unduly.

All performances must be solos – there is no longer an option for ensembles. Candidates who are being accompanied by an ensemble must ensure they have a strong solo role in their performance.

Nevertheless, the majority of candidates continue to score well in the performance component, with many demonstrating impressive and mature musicianship. Candidates and examiners seem to enjoy the performance component of the examination and many see it as an opportunity to shine.

However, the following points may be of use in improving things further.

Teachers should respond promptly when an examiner contacts the school to arrange appointments and should make every effort to accommodate the examiner's suggested time. It is not reasonable to offer only dates at the end of the allotted period of assessment. Teachers should make the examiner aware of any arrangements involving teaching or assessments or leaving dates which may impact on the practical assessment.

Please do not attempt to organise too many performances in one day. This puts undue pressure on both candidates and examiners, and tends to lead to the exams taking place in a less relaxed atmosphere.

- Choose a room which is large enough for music to be listened to at comfortable volumes and where the examiner and candidate have adequate personal space. Standard classrooms are normally fine – practice rooms are not.
- It is essential that the area around the room is quiet and that there is good signage to prevent intrusions during the assessments. There were a number of irregularities this year regarding this issue. School public address systems and bells should be disabled where possible and routing announcements should not be heard in the exam room while a performance is in progress.
- Set the room up wisely, with the piano's soundboard facing away from the examiner. If there is a drum kit, make sure the snare is off if it is not being used.
- Ensure that singers, in particular are positioned in a way that makes it easy for the examiners to hear the performance. Often the best formation is a triangle with the singer and pianist having a good line of sight, but with the singer being closer to the examiner than the pianist is.
- Use a good piano if possible. Have it tuned before the examination period.
- Ideally, try to avoid the possibility of music in an adjacent room, as this can be very distracting.

- Ensure candidates' instruments are in tune with the piano and that guitars are tuned well enough in advance to mean that only a brief check of the tuning is necessary as the assessment begins.
- If using PA equipment, set it up and have a sound check in advance. Have spare leads to hand in case of a technical failure.
- If using backing tracks, make sure they are of a sufficiently high standard to help the candidate play expressively. The examiner will not be able to operate the backing track. Make sure the balance between the candidate and the backing track is appropriate.
- Candidates are not permitted to have mobile phones in the room. They may use a computer to play a backing track, but it must be verifiably disconnected from the internet, again a number of issues arose this year regarding this issue.
- Make sure the correct Candidate Assessment Forms are completed in advance of the examiner's visit. Download them from the CCEA music microsite if necessary.
- When timetabling, allow around 20 minutes for each AS Candidate and around 25 minutes for A2 candidates. This provides enough time for tuning, sound checks and the completion of forms, and minimizes the stress for everyone involved. However, there are sometimes occasions when things will not run tightly to this schedule. Centre's must be prepared to be flexible if examiners request time to write the paperwork between candidates. Equally, the exams can sometimes run a little ahead of schedule – and schools should be ready to adapt as the schedule evolves throughout the visit.
- Examiners work to a tight schedule and may need to move to another school promptly. Please be ready to begin the assessments as soon as the examiner arrives.
- Examiners should conduct the assessments in a manner which is humane, relaxed and professional. Candidates should be encouraged to relax and enjoy the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability.
- Examiners are not permitted to discuss marks, or even to give vague feedback at the end of the assessments. Please do not ask them to do this.

Special Circumstances

Examiners are not permitted to take information about medical or pastoral issues into account while assessing. The correct way to apply for special consideration is through the centre's Examinations Officer. Please do not attempt to pressurise examiners into breaking this policy.

Practices Which are Not Allowed

- Candidates may not play along with a backing track which contains the candidate's own part.
- Candidates should not leave the room once the exam begins. All sheet music, water bottles, medication and anything else that is required should be present in the room. Once a candidate leaves the room, their exam is over. It cannot be rescheduled once it has begun. So, if a candidate is ill, he/she should not attempt to start the assessment. An application for reschedule will only be approved where a candidate's exam has not already taken place.
- Teachers must ensure the rules about technology equipment are followed to the letter. Smart watches may not be in the room. Mobile phones may not be used to play backing tracks. Any computer used to play a backing track must be verifiably

disconnected from the internet. Failure to observe these requests will lead to accusations of malpractice.

Candidates sometimes fail to access high marks because of poor choices made.

Examples include:

- Performing for longer than the required time – this turns the exam into an unnecessary test of stamina. This is a very common error.
- Performing for less than the required time. It should be possible to plan a programme which meets the necessary requirements, without having to resort to inventing extra repeats, or spending long periods re-tuning between pieces. Repeats which are in the score are fine – but it is usually quite obvious when a candidate is repeating sections of the music to make up the time, and the practice does not serve candidates well. Unreasonably long gaps will not be ignored, and candidates will be penalized if it appears that they are wasting time between pieces to cross the minimum allowed time.
- Choosing music which the candidate cannot perform fluently because of insufficient technical ability.
- Performing music which highlights musical weaknesses rather than strengths – eg the classically trained singer who attempts musical theatre for variety's sake – or vice versa.
- Choosing music with no variety at all, thus losing the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to interpret a range of music sensitively.
- Opting to play 2 instruments when the candidate is clearly less proficient in one of them.
- Singers who choose to use sheet music – forfeiting the chance to gain marks for communication.
- Failing to sound-check or tune instruments properly in the seconds before the performance begins.

Please note – the level of difficulty of the performance is decided based on the majority of the performance. A performance which is 10 minutes long, containing 6 minutes of music at Grade 7 and 4 of Grade 6 will be assessed as Grade 7. A performance with an equal amount of Grade 6 and 7 music will be assessed in the candidates benefit as grade 7. A performance which is 4 minutes grade 7 and 6 minutes grade 6 will be assessed as Grade 6.

Accompanists

Accompanists should practice in advance with candidates. Sensitive accompaniment contributes to better performances. Centres should not allow a candidate's performance to be compromised by a poor accompaniment. Ideally accompanists should not be doubling the melody in musical theatre songs.

Viva Voce

Many candidates perform well and then lose marks because their viva lacks detail or is inadequately prepared. The viva must not be considered an afterthought. Examiners will base their questioning on the following script:

Choice of Programme

- Which piece you would like to talk about first?

Technical Issues Arising From the Performance

- What challenges have you encountered when learning this piece? – what did you find technically challenging? (examiners may encourage candidates to show what they mean on the score or demonstrate on their instrument), and
- How have you overcome those difficulties?

Expressive Features of the Music

- Once you had learned all the notes of the piece, what other aspects did you consider in relation to the style of the piece? What aspects in relation to the style did you start to focus on with your teacher?
- Singers only – How do you communicate the meaning of the words of the song?

Recordings

- Have you listened to any recordings – how did that assist you in preparing your performance?

Wider Repertoire – A2 Only

- Have you heard or played any other pieces in a similar style/by this composer?

Finishing Off

- Is there any other aspect of your performance you would like to talk about? / Is there anything else about your performance you would like to mention?

Teachers should practise this part of the examination with students to build up their ability to offer appropriate answers. However, candidates should not be taught to give answers which contain rehearsed sentences which they do not understand.

To access top marks, candidates need to be able to speak fluently about all of these areas, demonstrating depth of knowledge and a personal viewpoint.

Candidates should focus on the musical demands of their performance rather than on background details.

The best conversations will include exemplification of points made, either by pointing to the score or demonstrating on an instrument. The more specific candidates can be in their examples, the more likely they are to achieve high marks. For example, if asked about expressive features in the music, a weaker answer might simply consist of one-word such as “dynamics”. The best answers will contain specific referenced examples of decisions made by the candidate which show the candidate has really engaged with how the dynamics shape the piece.

Biographical information is almost never relevant.

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit AS 2 Composing

Option A Composing

Sixty-seven centres entered candidates for this unit of work and centres ranged in size from one to twenty- seven candidates.

Following the initial moderation process, 29 centres were classified as Category 3 (over 40% outside tolerance), 7 centres were classified as Category 2 (21% to 40% outside tolerance) and 31 centres were classified as Category 1 (20% or less outside tolerance). This is a significant improvement from last year and teachers should be commended for more accurate and consistent marking.

Of the 67 centres, 11 centres had their marks amended to moderator's marks with the largest amendment being minus 32 marks, 18 centres had their marks adjusted with the largest adjustment being minus 21 marks and 38 centres were not adjusted.

Teacher comments relating to compositions varied from very brief generic comments which were similar for all candidates in the centre to comprehensive comments which gave an excellent insight into the working methods of individual candidates. However, in some instances the comments made were not reflected in the marks awarded and occasionally comments related to the wrong criteria.

Creation, Development and Organisation of Ideas

Criterion 1 (creation, development and organisation of ideas) continues to be the most challenging for the candidate to score highly in. To achieve top marks in this criterion, it is essential that compositions have both a clear formal structure and well phrased melodic writing which then allows for further development by means of repetition, sequence, fragmentation, extension, inversion, diminution, augmentation and ornamentation. The lack of development is the most common difficulty and quite often the B section is less successful than the A section, losing direction and including insufficient contrast. Ternary form and Theme and Variation still prove to be the most popular structures, allowing for sufficient development, unity and variety. The candidates who scored highly in their vocal compositions handled the strophic structure well, using textural variety and backing vocals as developmental techniques.

This criterion was at times poorly assessed by centres, with many candidates given credit for compositions which lacked a clear structure, fluent melody and which were very limited in terms of the development of musical ideas.

Use of Resources

Criterion 2 (use of resources) This, as in previous years was more successful than criterion 1. Candidates in mark bands 3 and 4 were writing idiomatically and stylistically and had explored the full range of their chosen instruments. Where candidates lost marks it was the lack of textural variety which was insufficient. Teachers marking was lenient at times awarding top band marks to compositions in which the vocal or instrumental writing was not particularly idiomatic and which included insufficient textural variety. In general, musical textures tended to be very busy throughout the course of an entire composition. Many candidates would have benefitted from clear guidance as to how to score a piece successfully for instruments and voices.

The highest marks were awarded to compositions where candidates appeared to be familiar with and have experience of the instrumental or vocal forces they were writing for. Most candidates were placed in mark band three in this criterion.

Harmonic Handling

Harmonic handling (Criterion 3) was sometimes weak with some submissions lacking a satisfactory sense of harmonic pulse and progression. The most successful compositions displayed a high level of harmonic handling and included the more sophisticated chords expected at this level such as added 7th chords, diminished and augmented chords, combined with the correct use of chord inversions and clearly prepared cadence points. Whilst there were some very successful Traditional Irish compositions submitted, candidates should be mindful of the harmonic requirements required at this level and ensure these are included in this genre of composition.

Commentary

Commentaries were mostly satisfactory, with many candidates scoring in mark bands 2 and 3. Most candidates used the template format provided by CCEA, although some centres modified this slightly choosing instead to submit their commentaries as a word - processed document using the same section headings. In this instance it is important that the word count is provided. A reminder to teachers that commentaries which are over the +10% word limit tolerance will be penalised. In some commentaries the information provided lacked sufficient detail and in many cases information was included under the wrong heading. If a score is not provided then timings should be included in the analysis section and not bar numbers. It was also noted that some commentaries included inaccuracies of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Recordings were successfully uploaded this year and the majority were mixed well with individual parts clearly audible. Most compositions were produced using Sibelius or Garageband software programmes and the scores provided were useful in the moderation process. Many schools should be commended for submitting live recordings of SATB choral pieces.

As in previous years there was a variety of styles and genres submitted, such as Classical, Jazz, Irish, Popular and Incidental. Teachers should be reminded that no credit is awarded for the context of Incidental pieces and therefore the information provided in the commentary is irrelevant. Vocal compositions included both choral pieces and pop songs and there were some excellent submissions of compositions in both genres. The most successful were highly sophisticated in their writing for both voice and instrumental accompaniment.

While the majority of songs were structured in strophic form, some failed to display satisfactory evidence of the development of musical ideas as the song progressed. The majority of candidates included lead sheets which again is useful in the moderation process. Choral writing is a high level skill and some candidates struggled to successfully compose for four individual voices, particularly in polyphonic sections.

Instrumental submissions were scored for a wide variety of instrumental combinations, although the string quartet continued to be the most popular choice. The majority of pieces were structured in Ternary form.

The most successful compositions had a clear formal structure, well phrased melodic material, a clear harmonic structure, idiomatic instrumental writing and textural variety. Imaginative development of musical ideas was also in evidence. When Sibelius was used as a composing tool, scores were often included.

While it became obvious during the course of the moderating process that composition for many pupils and teachers continues to be a difficult realm in which to work, it was also evident that there are many candidates who excel in this area. Many of these pupils submitted excellent compositions which far exceeded the requirements for composition at AS level, and they and their teachers are to be commended for their efforts.

Teacher marking was more accurate this year with fewer centres being adjusted, and they again should be commended for this.

Option B Composition with Technology

The number of candidates choosing this option increased from last year. Fourteen centres entered candidates for AS Composition with Technology. The majority of centres entered a relatively small number of candidates (5 or less), but there was an increase in the number of centres who had large entries of 8 or more. Of the fourteen centres, six had their marks adjusted and two centres were amended to moderator's marks – some candidate's marks were increased and some were lowered. Six centres were found to have marked within the acceptable range. For the most part, where centres' marks were adjusted, there was a pattern of marking too leniently in only one or two of the criteria from the mark scheme, therefore candidates remained in the same order of ranking as the teacher had entered in the original sample of work. As a result, marks may only have been adjusted by -4 or -5. Of the centres that were adjusted, only two had to be adjusted by a larger amount - the greatest adjustment to marks was -12. Of the two centres that had their marks amended, this was a result of the candidates' marks changing rank order. One of these centres saw some of their candidates' marks remaining the same whilst others were amended by a relatively small margin; however, the other centre had three entries, and two of their entries were amended by -18 and -24.

Teachers' comments were very helpful, and showed insight into the working methods of their candidates. Most teachers provided detail specific to each candidate and for each criteria from the mark scheme. Although there was an improvement from last year, we still came across some instances where candidates had lost marks in certain areas but teachers' comments were completely positive, therefore it was difficult to deduce the reasoning behind arriving at certain marks in these cases. Teachers are reminded that marks for timbre and texture are awarded within criterion 3 and not criterion 1 – this was one of the main reasons for marks being adjusted within some centres.

Of the two stimuli provided, this year there was a more even distribution of candidates choosing either melody as a starting point. Centres seemed to favour one stimulus or the other, with all candidates composing using that stimulus. A small number of centres entered candidates with mixed use of the stimulus. All candidates submitted compositions with the minimum number of required tracks. There were a variety of ensemble choices, from film soundtrack, to folk, worship, classical, neo-classical, 20th century, romantic, folk, jazz, pop and rock. Candidates were very good at choosing a particular genre/ensemble and maintaining this style throughout. There were a small number of candidates where their chosen style was unclear or confused. All candidates except one stayed within tolerance of the time limit.

Most candidates chose to write within ternary form or theme and variations. A small number of submissions lacked clarity in overall form and in these cases, marks may have been adjusted to reflect poor organisation of ideas. Most candidates wrote exclusively for sequenced tracks, however there was an increase from last year in students choosing to write for a mixture of sequenced and live tracks, and some opted to write exclusively for live tracks. Most live tracks were clean and clear, and candidates tended to score well in

criterion 3 for their use of technology to enhance their final mix. Some theme and variations pieces were extremely well written, and in these instances, students were able to use variations to develop the melodic material as well as accompaniment styles.

Creation, Organisation and Development of Ideas Based on a Stimulus

Most popular means of developing material were through the use of fragmentation, melodic expansion, imitation, sequence, augmentation, diminution, ostinato, and addition of a countermelody. Some compositions made use of a short introduction whereas others used the stimulus from the very beginning – at times this was rather abrupt and a short intro helped to settle the listener. It is important when writing an introduction however that the material is somehow related to the stimulus, and that it does not become a large 16 bar section which affects the overall balance of the piece. Most candidates stated the stimulus towards the start of their composition and referred to it again towards the end, which made for a well rounded, competent arrangement. A very small number of entries stated the stimulus but then lost their way in development of ideas, never making it back to the original melody. A small number of centres chose to write a theme inspired by the stimulus, and then use the stimulus for a variation melody within the theme and variations form. This is a different way of using the stimulus but generally students handled the approach effectively and made sufficient reference to the stimulus as well as appropriate development of ideas within a clear structure, so performed well in criterion 1.

Harmonic Handling

Moderators were generally very happy with the standard of harmonic handling, with candidates showing good knowledge and understanding of functional harmony. Generally, the chords that were chosen to harmonise with the provided stimulus were accurate. There was slightly less success at times in development sections, where students perhaps lost some sense of harmonic pulse. There were a small number of entries where candidates failed to recognize that the stimulus melody may have needed chords to change perhaps twice in the bar, and instead they used the same chord for the entire bar. These candidates may have lost marks within criterion 2 as harmonic handling was not at the level expected for AS. Most candidates scored somewhere within mark band 3. There were several very promising compositions where candidates showed advanced techniques in harmonic writing, enhancing their pieces through the use of coloured chords, descending basslines, inversions, circle of fifths, and successful modulations rather than tonal shifts. Candidates who fell into mark band 2 or lower tended to show little consideration for the harmonic pulse, or chords chosen were not always appropriate, or bare/sparse (e.g. 1st and 5th but no 3rd sounded). Some students who chose pop/rock genres tended to use riff/ostinato and may not have considered the overall harmonic framework to a sufficient level. Cadential writing may have been weak.

Use and Control of Technological Resources Including Texture and Timbre

For many of the candidates entered, most marks were lost in criterion 3 – use and control of technological resources including texture and timbre. The majority of centres used Logic for their software, and a few centres used GarageBand and MicroLogic. For the vast majority of entries, tempos chosen were appropriate for the stimuli. It was noted that a small number of centres chose a very slow tempo for their compositions, with no gradations, and only just came within the minimum time requirement. Musically, the tempo chosen did not always suit the stimulus, and pieces lacked a sense of climax or direction due to the pulse. In these cases, candidates' marks may have been adjusted by the moderator. Some students chose to include tempo and dynamic gradations, and for those that controlled these for a natural

musical sound, this helped them achieve marks in band 4. For the most part, effects such as panning and reverb were applied with clear understanding of their purpose, and students explained this very well in their commentaries. There were a small number of students who had used reverb to the extreme and this really affected the overall impact of their mix, lacking clarity of ideas and parts.

Overall, the balance of tracks was reasonable – nearly all parts were audible but in a small number of instances, the melody line was overpowered by accompanying parts. Most centres understood the need to apply reverb consistently so that all instruments remained within the one room. In a very small number of cases, some of the instruments appeared extremely distant while others were very close. Panning was addressed well in most cases, particularly those with a traditional ensemble layout. A few candidates panned their instruments but used either extremely small values, resulting in a lack of space between parts, or panning was applied to the extreme and this affected the overall ‘sense’ of ensemble.

There were varying degrees of success with textural and timbral exploration. In order to achieve top band marks in this area, students must show consideration for the range of abilities of their chosen ensemble, such as contrast in staccato/legato, consideration for colour in choice instrument range, application of mutes etc. Some students showed real confidence in their part writing, allowing breathing space within their piece and allowing some instruments to rest for small sections, therefore highlighting and exploring the different timbral effects available. For a small number of centres, there was a lack of consideration for articulation/phrasing – particularly ends of phrases, and instruments sounded quite mechanical. Care must be taken, for example, when writing pizzicato sections, that the passage is not so fast as to leave it unplayable. When mastering their compositions, it was evident to moderators that some students had not listened to their mp3s before they were submitted – balance may have been poor, or the ending of their piece clipped. One centre submitted entries where the last chord of one student’s piece could be heard at the beginning of the next student’s work. It appears that the centre used a master file to convert to MP3 but much more care must be taken in each individual student’s submission that it is a clean and clear recording from start to finish.

Commentary

Commentaries were mostly of a very high standard, with many students scoring in the top band. It is important that students/teachers supply a word count with their commentary. Many students used the maximum word limit, but there were some who lost marks due to lack of detail in one or more criterion. It is helpful for students to provide specific examples or refer to particular parts of their piece in their commentaries – sections 2, 3 and 4 were sparse on detail in some instances. Some students chose to provide section 2 in an analytical table format, highlighting key moments and development techniques in their piece within their overall structure along with cadential points and harmonic points of interest. This was very successful, providing the moderator with a clear and concise overview of their ideas and working methods. Some centres still made reference to bar numbers with no accompanying score provided – please note that timings are much more appropriate. There is some confusion at times as to where candidates should include their information within commentaries – please note that section 3 – chosen resources and how they are used – refers to textural and timbral exploration within your piece.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 3 Responding to Music

Test of Aural Perception

Similar to last year, the standard of responses in this paper was not very high with many candidates not gaining high marks in the set work questions. Some candidates have difficulty recalling basic information in relation to the set works and often lack the general musical knowledge to answer perceptively on pieces of unfamiliar music. Yet again candidates were often not specific enough to gain full credit such as, stating “sequence” instead of “descending sequence” or referring to specific line numbers in vocal works. It should be noted that abbreviations are not accepted e.g. “pizz” or “vln1”.

Q1 Vivaldi: Concerto for Two Mandolins, Mt. 2, Bars 1-13

This question was quite well answered with a minority of candidates gaining full marks. In Part (a) the majority of the candidates identified the key correctly as “E minor”. It should be noted that “Em” is not accepted. Most candidates correctly identified the solo instrument as “mandolin” in Part (b)(i). The second part of this was also well answered with a majority of the candidates identifying the “ascending sequence” and “triplets”. A number of candidates stated “repetition” with specifying that it is “repeated pitches” and very few candidates mentioned the “rising third” or “rising tritone”. A large number of candidates gained two out of a possible three marks for Part (c). Some candidates mentioned “strings” without specifying “upper strings”, while others answered “repeated crotchets” instead of “repeated quavers”. The key and cadence in Part (d) and the developmental features in Part (e) were identified correctly by many candidates. Parts (f), (g) and (h) were well answered with some candidates incorrectly stating “ritornello” instead of “concerto” for Part (g).

Q2 Handel, Zadok the Priest, Bars 31-74

Most candidates identified the key, metre and texture in Part (a) and the three features in Part (b) correctly. It should be noted that candidates are expected to identify the exact metre of “3/4” since it is a set work and that “triple” is not accepted. In Part (c) many candidates stated incorrectly that the “sopranos and altos” were singing in line 5. The “longer note value” and “trill” on “ever” was identified by a large number of candidates. Some pupils confused the trill with a melisma. In part (ii) of this questions melisma was correctly recognised by most candidates but there was some confusion between tenors and basses. Some candidates mentioned the use of the orchestra rather than focusing on the vocal setting. “Fanfare-like trumpets” was the most common correct answer for Part (d). The verse anthem is a specific genre in itself but was often wrongly given as the answer to Part (e).

Q3 Bernstein: Tonight Quintet from West Side Story, Bars 672-102

This was the least well answered question of the set works on the paper. The recall questions (Parts (a), (c), (d) and (h)(i)) were reasonably well answered. The majority of candidates did not know what a harmonic feature was in Part (b) and instead offered melodic and textural features. A minority of candidates identified the “tonic pedal”. The majority of candidates did not know the correct key and cadence for Part (e). “Falling sequence” was a common answer in Part (f) but the majority of candidates incorrectly wrote “imitation” instead of “canon”. Most candidates identified little more than the “syncopation” in Part (g) and very few candidates identified the “beguine” rhythm in Part (h)(ii).

Q4 Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Mt. 1, Bars 1-44

Very few candidates gained high marks in this question with many failing to grasp what actually constituted “the opening melody and its accompaniment”. Candidates gained most of their marks in Parts (a), (b), (d) and (f). The marks for Part (c) were very poor with some candidates identifying the “melody played in horns” but little else. Other candidates were not specific enough and stated “brass” while others incorrectly stated that the melody started on double bass. The period of music in Part (e) was identified by many candidates but most could not specify why.

Q5 Howard Goodall: Eternal Light, A requiem, Agnus Dei, Bars 10-21 and 21-34

Many candidates did not refer to the line number in Parts (b) and (d) therefore not gaining the marks. Part (a) was generally well answered. Most candidates were not specific enough in their answers to gain marks in Part (b). The majority of candidates identified one melodic feature in Part (c) with “melisma” being the most common correct answer. Part (d) was not well answered with candidates often confusing sopranos and altos. Part (e) was well answered. Lack of specific detail in Part (f) lowered the mark for many candidates e.g. “pizzicato” without “lower strings” and “harp” without “chords”. A large number of candidates identified the “requiem/mass” correctly with some incorrectly answering “oratorio” or “anthem”.

Written Examination

The paper was accessible to all candidates and, as in the previous year the marks ranged from very high to very low. Candidates were well prepared for question two, the unseen analysis, with a number of candidates gaining full marks. Lower level answers struggled with chord identification and, for extended writing, provided irrelevant detail and did not reference the text where appropriate. As always many candidates struggled to notate the chords in the right way, frequently using ‘G major 7’ etc, rather than ‘G7’. It should be noted again that no abbreviations are accepted in Questions 1 and 2 such as ‘pizz’ instead of ‘pizzicato’ or ‘vln 1’ instead of first violin and ‘m’ or ‘min’ instead of ‘minor’ when referring to keys.

In the extended writing questions, candidates had a large tendency to lapse into irrelevant detail of musical analysis, general background information, or the context and story in the musicals. A greater focus in the writing along with more specific musical detail and accurate musical terminology is required in order to answer the questions.

Q1 Beethoven: Symphony no. 3 in E flat major (Eroica), Mt. 4, Bars 76-178

Many candidates identified the form of the music correctly in Part (a) with a number of candidates incorrectly writing ritornello, binary, sonata and rondo form. Very few candidates gained any marks for Part (b) with some candidates stating ‘contradanses’ but not specifying no. 7. There was a mixed response to Part (c) (i) with many candidates gaining one out of the possible two marks. There is still confusion over the meaning of ‘presentation of the theme’ with many candidates describing the development of the theme. The second part of this question was also not well answered with candidates addressing the trumpet and horn parts together rather than specifying what each was playing. Many candidates identified the ‘quavers’ but did not specify that they were playing ‘repeated/offbeat/staccato’. Many candidates failed to notate the identification of the chord correctly in Part (d) stating B flat major 7th which is incorrect. The ‘root position’ was generally correct. A very small minority of candidates identified the ‘fugato’ in Part (e)(i). Candidates were able to identify some ways in which the theme was developed in Part (ii) with many describing the melody instead. Candidates did not score well in Part (f), the identification of keys.

Q2 Haydn, String Quartet in G minor, Op. 74, No. 3, Mt. 3, Menuetto and Trio, Bars 1-46

In Part (a) around half of the responses recognised that the viola and cello had the opening melody. Very few compared the second melodic presentation to first as being an octave lower. Quite a few responses focused on the interval between violin 1 and 2 from bar 6 onwards, rather than the thirds between the viola and cello. Most candidates gained the mark for ‘octaves’ in Part (b). The key of D major was not always identified in Part (c) and the cadence was not always correct. In Part (d) ‘ascending sequence’ and ‘modulation’ were commonly identified as techniques developing the melody, but there was often a misconception of ‘inversion’ being likened to ‘contrary motion’. Many candidates could identify both chords and positions successfully in Part (e), although D7 was often incorrectly given as D major7. Most candidates gained marks in Part (f), with most correctly identifying G minor and D minor respectively. While most candidates recognised bars 24 to 27 as containing the inverted pedal in Part (g), some candidates were confused about whether this range should extend to bar 28. Most candidates correctly clarified violin 1 as playing this, with a small number writing both violin 1 and violin 2, and others, merely “violin”, which was not specific enough.

Area of Study: Sacred Vocal Music (Anthems)

- (a) Candidates could demonstrate some knowledge of the set work, with many responses mentioning the use of solo male alto and the SAATB choir, but few managing to articulate the alternation between the soloist and full choir throughout the anthem. Yet more scarce, were responses which demonstrated a verse by verse knowledge of the set work. Many candidates mentioned the use of a homophonic cadence on “the Christ” at the end of the first section, with varying degrees of success, since not all of the ending phrase was written with the same texture. Some candidates mentioned the use of fugal texture, but this was not always clear. In many cases, candidates referred to the wrong verse in relation to these fugal entries, and many candidates were unable to quote where in the text the fugal entries occurred. Others referred to fugal sections as imitative. Many candidates failed to clarify the fugal entries by entry order. Candidates who gained high marks systematically addressed the relevant musical features as and when they appeared in relation to the anthem’s unfolding text. While most answers could identify the choral entries in the first full chorus, use of clear quotation and description was not sustained throughout each full chorus section. Excellent commentary was attained in only a small number of scripts, whenever a high level of detail was attached to each textual reference. Most candidates struggled with clearly describing the second choral section’s ending as homophonic: firstly, without sopranos and then, on its repeat, with the full choir including sopranos on “Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No”.

There were often extensive sections of irrelevant references to word painting, keys and melodic features of the soloist. There were also incomplete quotes and incorrect words referred to in many answers.

- (b) This was the least popular answer in Section 3. Only a small number of candidates managed to attain an appropriate level of detail when answering this question. Firstly, some candidates had difficulty identifying the correct section. Secondly, some candidates found it difficult to accurately describe the sections based on the text, because the text in this section was often repeated, with different treatments.

Candidates made some attempt to describe the change in this central choral section in relation to the previous section, with a few recognising the tempo change and metre change, and a small number accurately stating the key.

Most candidates' description of "The enemy shouteth" phrase was unsuccessful, as they incorrectly cited either "repetition", "imitation" or "antiphony" as the nature of how the text is treated with the treble soloist and SATB choir, rather than "call and response". The unison texture was not commonly identified.

A small number of answers recognised the use of dramatic features such as 'sustained note on "fly"', imitative, paired entries on "O God, hear my cry" and 'use of tierce de Picardie on "my cry"', but very few could list these, with the cumulative terminology. For example, if "O God, hear my cry" was accurately quoted, it was rarely detailed with both 'imitative' and 'paired in thirds'.

A small number of responses mentioned the use of large octave or 7th leaps on "O God", as well as the highest note (A) of the piece on the word "cry". However, many found it difficult to identify the exact word and time that these features occurred.

Few, if any, responses recognised the E tonic pedal in the organ in the closing bars of the section. Similarly, very few candidates pointed out the unresolved E7 chord in the final phrase.

Area of Study: Secular Vocal Music (Musicals)

- (a) Many candidates wrote a description of Billy's character or provided an analysis of the opening music rather than addressing the question. Frequently, descriptions of motifs were given without any musical depth and with no specific reference to the text.

While many could at least partially quote the spoken section, where Billy realises he could have a daughter instead of a son, not many were able to achieve the detail and breadth to gain much credit for this section. Candidates had difficulty recognising the 'underscored violin solo's' source as from the opening. Many candidates took time to describe the accompaniment pattern here, whilst these features were more an indication of Billy's descending into contemplation, rather than the music relating to his thoughts on his future daughter. Candidates got lost in melodic description of this "you can have fun with a son" section.

Most answers acknowledged some features which have changed in the "My little girl" section, such as the 'F major tonality' and 'broader tempo'. There were varying degrees of success in choosing appropriate examples to describe the more 'Romantic style' associated with a daughter in contrast to a son. Some responses used terms "legato" and "lyrical" in relation to the vocal line, while very few comments could mention use of 'Romantic harmony' with a clear example.

The two main motifs were not always clearly described and referenced with a 'triplet' and 'dotted rhythm', on "My little girl" and "half again as bright", respectively. There was even less success in mentioning 'augmentation' of both motifs with appropriate examples. Candidates had difficulty describing the accompaniment with an appropriate level of detail, for example, the 'string countermelody' accompanying "My little girl" was both 'rising and chromatic'. Few candidates could mention one, let alone both. Similarly, in the final section, although the accompanying chords to "She's gotta be sheltered and fed and dressed" were mentioned at times, only a small number of candidates could use three adjectives to describe this accompaniment as being 'tutti, Bb, and with rests in between'.

The most common error in candidate's responses was the vast sections of irrelevant commentary about Billy's personality and inner turmoil. Many commentaries spent a disproportionate amount of time explaining Billy's conflict and character in relation to the lyrics.

- (b)** Candidates had varied success in describing the different characters' motifs in this section, with some candidates confusing Enjolras, Valjean and Javert, misquoting them or using lyrics from an irrelevant section. A common misconception was to spend time discussing the origin of the motifs from songs earlier in the Act rather than giving an accurate musical description.

Some candidates described the motifs correctly, but could not give the appropriate level of detail, for example 'the Thenardier's semiquavers' needed qualification as being 'repeated'.

Most candidates accurately described "tomorrow we'll discover" as being in 'unison', although few, if any, noticed the harmony used at this point.

There was slight confusion as to which phrases in "One more dawn", "One More Day" and "One day more" were homophonic or unison.

While many responses acknowledged the instrumental motifs which comprised the ending, very few candidates could attain the level of detail, including melodic description and accurate instrumentation, for example, while a descending passage was played in the bass, few responses mentioned that it was both in minims, and performed by trombone/bass guitar or cello.

Finally, this answer, like the previous, contained a vast amount of irrelevant commentary about the thoughts and feelings of the characters, about their emotional investment and desperation. Furthermore, some musical description lacked appropriate use of vocabulary, and focused on superficial aspects such as "loud dynamics", "combined harmonies" and "use of brass". Another noticeable pitfall was the misspelling of characters' names.

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit A2 2 Composing

Option A

In total, 69 centres (14 of which were consortiums) submitted work in this unit. Following the initial moderation process, 24 centres were classified as category 1; 6 centres were classified as category 2; and 39 centres were classified as category 3. At post-moderation, 28 centres were adjusted, 10 centres received amendments to moderator marks and 31 centres had no adjustment or amendment of marks.

A wide variety of compositions were submitted, both in terms of variety of musical style and standard of work. Genres included string, brass and woodwind quartets, Irish traditional sets, pieces for solo piano and vocal compositions. Musical styles ranged from Baroque, Classical and Romantic to jazz and pop. In general, where a clear genre was outlined, candidates tended to achieve a more successful outcome. Often, these candidates were able to interpret characteristic features from other composers and to weave them into their own work, which enhanced the overall sense of style of the composition. Weaker candidates who did not have an appropriate focus from the outset struggled as they appeared to be unaware of their desired outcome and their pieces therefore lacked a clear stylistic direction.

In the vocal genre, musical styles included pop and rock songs, musical theatre-inspired songs and SATB choral pieces. Pop songs were mostly strophic in structure and were generally quite stylistic. However, many songs lacked sufficient development as the compositions progressed, relying on repetition of ideas rather than imaginative development. Choral writing is an ambitious task at this level and attempts in this style met with mixed results. Some candidates produced very idiomatic choral pieces while others were less successful.

Creation, Development and Organisation of Ideas

Ternary form continues to be the most popular structure in which to compose. Ternary form pieces generally started well with a strong "A" section. Frequently, Section B was not quite so successful. Often the return of the A section lacked significant development of musical ideas. Variation form also proved to be a popular structure and generally was handled well. However, more ambitious formal structures, including sonata and rondo form, were frequently not completely successful and lacked a satisfactory balance between unity and variety and a sense of wholeness. It should also be noted that structures such as 12 bar blues which are based on a pre-existing chord pattern are not an appropriate choice at A2 level.

The most successful compositions introduced strong melodic material from the outset. These melodic ideas were well shaped with balanced phrasing and allowed for effective and imaginative melodic development – mostly through sequence, imitation, fragmentation – as the piece progressed. Less successful compositions often lacked a sense of coherent melodic content throughout.

Use of Resources

Many candidates displayed an excellent understanding of their chosen resources which were employed both idiomatically and imaginatively. Candidates who chose to compose for instruments they were familiar with tended to produce more idiomatic outcomes. The most successful compositions showed an understanding of the use of texture to provide interest

and variety in the piece. Candidates who chose to write for only one instrument had a greater challenge in creating appropriate textural variety in their work. A small number of candidates chose to compose for larger orchestral groups. This is a huge undertaking at this level and candidates often struggled to compose successfully for such large instrumental groupings.

Harmonic Handling

Harmonic handling for the most part was secure. Candidates achieving the higher mark bands for this criterion submitted pieces which made use of a wide range of chords presented in a variety of positions/inversions. In addition, these pieces included clear cadential progressions and correctly prepared modulations, often to more remote keys. In the weaker submissions, many used primary and secondary triads effectively, but often lacked anything beyond this. Some work suggested little progress and understanding beyond what might be expected from a good student at GCSE level. In a small number of compositions, the sense of harmonic pulse and progression was very weak.

Commentary

The majority of commentaries adhered to the prescribed format. While some commentaries gave an excellent analytical overview of the composition, the majority were very general and lacked substantive detail relating to the piece. Often, information appeared in the incorrect section and frequently the commentary was well-written but the information it included was not a true reflection of the composition. It would be useful if the commentary pro forma generated an exact word count - in many cases, it was impossible to know how many words were included in the commentary.

A number of centres submitted commentaries which were significantly over the 1200-word limit while some submitted commentaries in which the majority of the information was presented as lengthy lists in a table format, making it difficult to assess the quality of the written information. Centres should note that while tables may be included, the majority of the information should be presented as prose. Timings of compositions were often not included in the commentary and in the absence of a score this made the pieces very difficult to follow. Bar numbers were regularly referred to in the commentary, but again these are of no value in the absence of a score. Occasionally, songs were submitted without an accompanying lead sheet.

Teacher comments were included with all compositions and these ranged from very brief and generic statements to detailed and comprehensive comments which gave an excellent insight into the candidate's work and explained how and why marks had been awarded. Occasionally, teacher comments suggested a level of sophistication which was not actually evident in the candidate's work.

For the first time audio recordings were uploaded directly negating the need for the submission of CD recordings of each piece and streamlining the moderation process. In general, recordings were clear and of a good standard. However, some centres again submitted Sibelius recordings of vocal compositions and these seldom did the composition justice. Conversely, some very poor live vocal recordings were submitted. Centres should note that sufficient time needs to be set aside to rehearse and record compositions. It is the recording, not the score which is required: scores only serve as a guide. If there is any doubt as to the quality of a live recording, it would be best practice (and in the candidate's best interest) to submit a Sibelius recording in addition to the live recording.

The vast majority of candidates submitted pieces which were within the confines of the 2-3 minute time limit. However, a small number of candidates submitted compositions

which fell well below the minimum 2-minute time requirement and as a result, candidates struggled to fully develop their musical ideas given the short time span. Similarly, a number of candidates submitted compositions which exceeded the 3-minute upper time limit and typically these pieces tended to lose focus and began to meander.

Centre Marking

Centre marking generally tended to be rather lenient across all marking criteria and as a result many centres awarded marks which were outside of tolerance.

The marking of Criterion 1 (Creation, development and organisation of ideas) was particularly lenient. Many compositions lacked completely coherent structures, fluent, clearly phrased melodic material or significant development of musical ideas. As such, these pieces fulfilled the descriptors of Bands 1-3.

Similarly, marking for Criterion 2 (Use of resources) was also frequently lenient. Instrumental writing was often not particularly idiomatic and musical textures were either very busy or lacked textural variety and contrast.

Criterion 3 (Harmonic handling) was often applied incorrectly. While many compositions displayed secure harmonic handling and were worthy of top band marks, in other submissions the harmonic vocabulary used was not always appropriate to the task and lacked the fluency and sophistication required at this level to achieve top band marks.

Centre marking for criterion 4 (Commentary) again tended to be quite generous with the majority of marks awarded by centres falling into Mark Bands 3 and 4. However, many of these commentaries gave a general overview of the piece and lacked substantive detail.

It would be beneficial for centres to attend agreement trials and to make use of the portfolio clinic in the future for further guidance and clarification of the standards expected in this component at A2 level.

Option B Composition with Technology

Fourteen centres entered candidates for A2 Composition with Technology. Of the fourteen centres, five had their marks adjusted and one centre was amended to moderator's marks – some candidate's marks were increased and some were lowered. Eight centres were found to have marked within the acceptable range. For the most part, where centres' marks were adjusted, the adjustment was minimal -4 to -6 marks. There were a small number of candidates whose marks were adjusted by a larger margin, the greatest being -20.

In most cases, teacher comments were helpful, although in some instances a more elaborate explanation as to why marks were withheld would be extremely advantageous. Teachers must explain why they have deducted marks. It is not good practice for teachers to type full sentences from the assessment criteria. Teachers are reminded that marks for timbre and texture are awarded within criterion 3 and not criterion 1 – this was one of the main reasons for marks being adjusted within some centres.

Of the two stimuli provided, most candidates opted for Stimulus 2. All candidates submitted compositions with the minimum number of required tracks. Samples included a wide range of influences, genres and styles, from Classical to 20th Century, Jazz, Pop, Irish Traditional and Modern/Film Music. There were some attempts at 'fusions' which were mostly successful. Where there is a fusion of styles, candidates should make coherence, musicality and musical unity a priority, as imbalance and stylistic confusion can be an issue where the marrying of styles is concerned. All candidates stayed within tolerance of the time limit.

The majority of compositions were in Ternary Form, but there were some in Binary, Rondo and Theme and Variation Form. Most candidates wrote exclusively for sequenced tracks, however there was an increase from last year in students choosing to write for a mixture

of sequenced and live tracks, and some opted to write exclusively for live tracks. Most live tracks were clean and clear, and candidates tended to score well in criterion 3 for their use of technology to enhance their final mix. Some theme and variations pieces were extremely well written, and in these instances, students were able to use variations to develop the melodic material as well as accompaniment styles.

Creation, Development and Organisation of Ideas Based on a Stimulus

Most popular means of developing material were through the use of fragmentation, melodic expansion, imitation, sequence, augmentation, diminution, ostinato, and addition of a countermelody. Some compositions made use of a short introduction whereas others used the stimulus from the very beginning – at times this was rather abrupt and a short intro helped to settle the listener. It is important when writing an introduction however that the material is somehow related to the stimulus, and that it does not become a large 16 bar section which affects the overall balance of the piece. Most candidates stated the stimulus towards the start of their composition and referred to it again towards the end, which made for a well rounded, competent arrangement. A very small number of entries stated the stimulus but then lost their way in development of ideas, never making it back to the original melody. A small number of centres chose to write a theme inspired by the stimulus, and then use the stimulus for a variation melody within the theme and variations form. This is a different way of using the stimulus but generally students handled the approach effectively and made sufficient reference to the stimulus as well as appropriate development of ideas within a clear structure, so performed well in criterion 1.

Harmonic Handling

Moderators were generally very happy with the standard of harmonic handling, with candidates showing good knowledge and understanding of functional harmony. In general however, many candidates did not stretch themselves to top band with use of chromatic chords and advanced use of harmony, eg modulation to unrelated keys. Generally, the chords that were chosen to harmonise with the provided stimulus were accurate. There were two particularly strong centres with very promising compositions where candidates showed advanced techniques in harmonic writing.

Use and Control of Technological Resources Including Texture and Timbre

For many of the candidates entered, most marks were lost in criterion 3 – use and control of technological resources including texture and timbre. The majority of centres used Logic for their software. More time must be spent on the final stages of coursework – mixing tracks and mastering. In many instances, it appeared that the final mix had been rushed and that the track had not been listened to in its entirety. Chosen tempos were mostly appropriate. For the most part, effects such as panning and reverb were applied with clear understanding of their purpose.

Overall, the balance of tracks was reasonable – nearly all parts were audible but in a small number of instances, the melody line was overpowered by accompanying parts. Most centres understood the need to apply reverb consistently so that all instruments remained within the one room. Panning was addressed well in most cases, particularly those with a traditional ensemble layout. A few candidates panned their instruments but used either extremely small values, resulting in a lack of space between parts, or panning was applied to the extreme and this affected the overall ‘sense’ of ensemble.

There were varying degrees of success with textural and timbral exploration. In order to achieve top band marks in this area, students must show consideration for the range of

abilities of their chosen ensemble. At A2, the minimum number of instruments required is 6. On some occasions, candidates had composed 3-4 good parts and the other 2 instrumental parts were sparse or doubled another part. There was often a lack of textural variety and good use of counter melody – parts tended to wander or lack a sense of phrasing/structure/direction. If parts cannot be remembered/sung back having been listened to, then perhaps ideas need to be revised.

Commentaries provided good information. However, they often lacked specific harmonic detail and almost always lacked the sufficient detail in the chosen resources box. Many candidates neglected to add specific musical examples to Sections 2, 3 and 4 of their commentaries. It is important that students/teachers supply a word count with their commentary. Some centres still made reference to bar numbers with no accompanying score provided – please note that timings are much more appropriate. There is some confusion at times as to where candidates should include their information within commentaries – please note that Section 3 – chosen resources and how they are used – refers to textural and timbral exploration within your piece.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit A2 3 Responding to Music

Test of Aural Perception

This was a fair paper, which assessed one orchestral set work, two vocal set works and unfamiliar music. Questions contained appropriate challenge and differentiation, with the mark scheme containing higher-level answers that awarded candidates credit for more perceptive comments. Candidates clearly had sufficient time to complete the paper.

The particular focus of some questions on aspects such as scoring, or melodic features, continues to be overlooked by candidates who subsequently provide irrelevant musical information, which while correct, does not answer the question and cannot be credited. Candidates occasionally lost marks for abbreviations of keys and “pizz bass” instead of ‘pizzicato double bass’.

There is an increasing number of candidates citing periods of composition rather than dates, which cannot be credited at A2 Level. Set works were not known as well as expected and there is strong evidence that those candidates who listen to a wider musical repertoire, and have a strong understanding and knowledge of musical forms and features, are much better prepared to cope with the unfamiliar musical extracts. Some candidates still seem, at this level, to struggle to recognise aurally even basic instruments, forms and elements.

Q1 Debussy, Nuages from Nocturnes, Bars 64-87

Question 1 was the most successful question for the majority of candidates.

Part (a) was quite well answered, although violin was a common incorrect alternative to harp, or sometimes clarinet. In Part (b) a variety of answers were given with ‘whole tone’ a common incorrect answer. Part (c) was poorly answered, and too often a general chord was given, for example, 9th chord or dominant 9th. E major was also a common incorrect answer. In Part (d) the whole tone was usually correct and ninth chord less successfully recognised correctly, with ‘diminished seventh’ a frequent incorrect answer. A common failing in Part (f) was that answers were often too generic. ‘Muted instruments’ were often listed but needed to be more specific in mentioning ‘strings’ or ‘horn’. Many candidates also answered incorrectly ‘sul ponticello’, not a feature of the extract heard. Similarly, flute and harp were identified but with no mention of the low register and the ‘use of harmonics’ was cited but without reference to the harp. Part (f) was quite well answered, but a frequent incorrect answer was ‘neoclassical’.

Q2 Fauré Requiem, Libera Me, Bars 1-36

Most candidates in Part (a) correctly answered ‘baritone’ for the type of solo voice although some candidates stated ‘bass’. A common mistake in answering Part (b) was to state the tonality as minor rather than the specific key of D minor. There were occasional abbreviations such as Dm and Gm, which implied chords rather than keys and therefore were not credited. Pizzicato lower strings and rhythmic ostinato were commonly correct in Part (c). However, there was a frequent mention of violins rather than violas and very few candidates referred to the organ pedal doubling the lower strings. Lots of answers stated perfect cadence rather than imperfect cadence in Part (d) with interrupted also appearing as an answer. ‘Rising sequence’ was commonly correct, along with ‘falling seventh’ in Part (e) and mention of an octave leap and repetition, neither of which were credit worthy appeared in a significant

number of scripts. The majority of candidates answered incorrectly in Part (f) stating diminished seventh as opposed to dominant seventh. Some candidates incorrectly answered binary form for question Part (g) which reinforced the impression that some candidates simply did not seem to have revised or have even a basic knowledge of this set work.

Q3 Schumann, Widmung, Bars 1-21

This set work extract proved the most unsuccessful for many candidates, with again basic facts such as the overall metre and genre answered incorrectly. 'Dotted rhythm' and 'rising and falling arpeggio' were the most common correct answers for Part (a) and while there was some mention of tonic/dominant harmony, this was more often, not specific or accurate enough to gain credit.

Lots of answers mentioned 'rising and falling scales' or 'sequences' rather than arpeggios and there was some mention of repetition of the opening bar, although written and phrased in a slightly different ways. As stated the metre was not well known with many incorrect answers such as 6/8, 2/4, 2/2 and 3/4. Part (c) was also not well answered with 'octave' and 'fifth' common incorrect answers and in Part (d) there were lots of answers of 'dominant seventh' or 'minor', instead of 'major' and 'augmented sixth' or 'diminished' instead of 'diminished seventh' for the second type of chord on "Grab". Again in Part (e) candidates did not seem familiar with the ornamentation in this set work with most answers incorrect and all types of ornaments offered as answers: turn, appoggiatura, trill or mordent instead of acciaccatura. Answers to Part (f) were too general with lots of candidates writing about the use of melisma, quieter dynamics, chromaticism, metre change, tempo change, rather than for example, stating it was slower. For Part (g) there were too many vague and incorrect answers in terms of the overall genre, such as Romantic, secular music or extended madrigal.

Q4 Beethoven, Quintet in Eb major, Op.16, Mt.2, Bars 17-321

Recognition of the oboe in Part (a) and bassoon in Part (c) were generally well answered, with cor anglais or clarinet being some of the incorrect answers given for Part (a) and cello and double bass wrong answers for Part (c). Again the ornament was not well identified in Part (b) with 'trill' or 'mordent' being the most common incorrect answers. Recognition of the relative major key proved challenging with some candidates struggling to hear that the key was even major at this point and referring to the relative minor key instead. Answers to Part (d) included lots of irrelevant information that did not focus on the detail of the accompaniment, e.g. tonic/dominant harmony, homophonic texture, descending scales, parallel thirds, dynamics and rhythmic ostinato. The piano was usually correctly identified, as was the right hand off beat, left hand on beat and right hand chords. Recognition of the woodwind texture in Part (e) was well answered with some incorrect responses referring to antiphonal.

Dates were often a little too early or a little too late. Classical or Romantic periods were given at times as a general answer. As in previous examinations suggestion of dates of composition was not well answered. Many candidates were unsuccessful in giving reasons to support their choice of date of composition and answered very generally stating 'use of chromaticism' or 'lyrical melody' and did not give reasons applicable to the Classical Period.

Answers frequently referred to lyrical or expressive melodies, use of rubato, use of piano, soloistic use of woodwind, ornamentation, dissonance and syncopation. Four bar/regular phrasing and clear cut cadences were the common correct answers.

Q5 Bach, Concerto in A minor, Mt. 1, Bars 1- 65

The recognition of the opening minor tonality was mostly correct and in Part (b) 'descending sequence' was the most common correct answer, along with 'semiquaver' and 'descending scale'. Incorrect answers often referred to non-melodic features and included imitation, virtuosic violin playing, call and answer between violin and harpsichord. General ornamentation was too often given rather than specifying a trill. A few candidates gained a mark for the rising fourth but this was occasionally identified as a rising fifth. In Part (c) 'suspension' and 'perfect cadence' were commonly circled, with the tierce de Picardie less often identified and 'dominant pedal' being the most frequent incorrect answer. For Part (d), many candidates incorrectly answered concerto grosso or concerto or referred to a string quartet. Dates given in Part (e) were often incorrect and frequently between 1600-1700 and in Part (ii) candidates lost marks due to a general comment about the harpsichord, without mentioning continuo. Predominance of strings was well known but incorrect answers included the following features: ornamentation, terraced dynamics and use of the solo violin.

Q6 Bernstein, Fancy Free, Mt. 1 Enter Three Sailors, Bars 22-77

Many candidates were successful in answering Parts (a), (b) and (c) and (d)(i). However in Part (d)(ii), few candidates could identify features of the scoring apart from the use of the drum kit and gave answers that were not applicable to the context of the question in relation to scoring. Many rhythmic and melodic features were given, for example, blues notes, scotch snap, chromaticism, syncopation and complex rhythms. There was frequent mention of cymbal rather than suspended cymbal. Candidates mostly overlooked the scoring aspect which the question had focused on.

Written Examination

In this new style written paper candidates performed from poor to excellent. It was encouraging to see a small number achieving sixty or more marks, while at the other end of the mark range, some candidates achieved less than twenty marks and often did not attempt questions at all. There were a small number of candidates who gained full marks in at least three of the four sections of the paper. There was often a clear correlation between Question 1 and 2 in terms of candidate's performance, with similar marks in both questions.

Quite a number of candidates still confuse the key commands in questions, for example, type of chord (when many simply gave a key), presentation of melody and description of melodic/harmonic features etc. Some candidates see this as carte blanche to list as many features as possible, indiscriminate of their melodic or harmonic nature. Some candidates mistook articulation, dynamics and scoring features for harmonic or melodic features. Other candidates encounter difficulty in expressing chords and types of chords correctly: for example, F major 7 was incorrectly written as F7major. Candidates still insist on writing abbreviated terms such as pizzicato to 'pizz' which is not acceptable at this level.

Throughout the extended writing passages, the biggest error made by candidates was an inability to assign a particular point to a specific section or line of text. This was a common feature of both stronger and weaker candidates, the former often losing out on an extra mark. Marks were also lost for unnecessary introductions and conclusions, the latter being a regurgitation of points made previously.

Reading the question and deciphering what the main point of the question is, largely the biggest hurdle for some candidates, who were able to write out passages of the support material. This invariably produced more general details rather than what was being asked specifically in the question.

Candidates must be aware that poor spelling in answers does affect its readability. Illegibility was a problem in around a quarter of extended answers. Incorrect or poor grammar marred many answers and some answers were written like a list, with words missing from sentences. Other sentences were overly long. Bar numbers persist to be used as a point of reference, although this has been discouraged at all support events. The number of spelling errors encountered was disconcerting. The largest grammatical error made was neglecting to use the apostrophe to express ownership. Another grammatical inconsistency was failing to use appropriate conventions to reference commentaries. Often, candidates referred to the set work, or sections of the set work text without inverted commas to indicate the Latin text.

Compulsory Area of Study: Music for Orchestra in the Twentieth Century

Q1 Ravel, Rigaudon from Le Tombeau de Couperin, Bars 1-36

Most candidates gained over half marks and many candidates achieved around fifteen marks or above out of twenty. Answers in Part (a) produced a range of marks, with many candidates able to identify both chords and inversions. Many candidates recognised the F major 7th though there were occasional references to F major (with no reference to the 7th used.) Ab major 2nd inversion was also widely answered correctly by many candidates. There were ample opportunities in Part (b) to pick up the maximum four marks, but ‘pizzicato’ needed to be placed in conjunction with ‘cello’ or ‘violin 2/viola’. Some answers identified the instruments, but did not include this additional detail. Many candidates were able to gain marks for mentioning ‘crotchets’ or ‘quavers’ and a number wrote “descending sequence” rather than “descending scale”. Most candidates identified the bassoon in Part (c) with a small number stating oboe. Part (d) was well answered and in Part (e) some candidates mentioned the sequence but did not specify that it was ‘descending’ and therefore did not gain the mark. Many candidates attempted part Part (e) well but it is not good practice to list a plethora of developmental techniques in the hope that two of these will be right. There was ample opportunity to gain two marks from the varied list available, including fragmentation, repetition and ‘played by first/solo flute.’ Part (f) was well answered and many candidates picked up a mark for identifying the cadence, even if the key was incorrect. In Part (g) neoclassicism was the most common answer but still a few candidates referred to the style as ‘impressionistic’ or ‘twentieth century.’ In Part (h), when asked for harmonic features, many candidates referred to the rhythmic or melodic features, such as ‘syncopation’ or ‘anacrusis’ whilst others referred incorrectly to ‘ambiguous tonality’ or ‘false relations’. The most common correct answers were ‘dissonance’, ‘ninth’, ‘added note chords’ or ‘modulation to unrelated keys’. ‘Extended, ninth and added notes’ were not accepted without being paired with ‘chords’. ‘Parallel triads’ and ‘bitonality’ were also sometimes correctly detailed but were less popular answers for this question. In the final question Part (i) ternary was mostly accurate. However, surprisingly there were many other incorrect forms such as ‘ritornello form’.

SECTION B Unfamiliar Score Analysis

Brahms, Symphony No. 3, Mt. 2 Bars 37-63

There were mixed levels of success with this question and it was encouraging to see some candidates achieve full or near full marks. In Part (a) some candidates still interpret this question as a question of key and others used the abbreviation ‘dim’ or did not specify the seventh. Most candidates could recognise at least one melodic feature in Part (b), with triplet, stepwise/scalic, ascending sequence, anacrusis and lower auxiliary note all being easily identified. In Part (c) clarinets and bassoons were often identified, whereas the oboe

and horn were not. Octaves were not often identified in either instrumental pairings and 'unison' was a common incorrect answer. It was encouraging that the more perceptive candidates recognised that the melody was presented a (perfect) fourth higher. In Part (d) candidates achieved a range of marks, with the position/inversion question proving more successful than the identification of the chord. Candidates had most difficulty with the D7 chord with a range of incorrect answers such as, "D major 7" or 'D dominant 7'. Part (e)(i) was handled well although some candidates confused the mordent for a trill. Part (e)(ii) was poorly handled with very few candidates observing the pedal. Part (g) was successfully identified by most as a 'symphony' with 'concerto grosso', 'concerto' or 'minuet and trio' the most consistently incorrect answers given.

SECTION C Area of Study: Sacred Vocal Music (Mass/Requiem)

Question (a) proved a much more popular option than Question (b) in this section of the paper.

Q3 (a) A range of marks were awarded in this question with varying degrees of success in recalling the scoring, textural and melodic features of this set work. While a small number of candidates only wrote one point or several lines only, many candidates could provide between seven and twelve clearly referenced points. Good answers were very thorough, matching many points in the mark scheme. These answers used the sections of text as a basis to form a 'breakdown' of main points, and were very succinct. Marks were missed by both stronger and weaker candidates, due to insufficient references to appropriate lines of the Agnus Dei text. This was particularly noticeable in reference to points made about melisma, imitation, ascending sequence and the parallel 3rds between the soprano and alto.

Most candidates could clearly communicate which part of the Agnus Dei text they were discussing, but only a handful were able to accurately recall specific details about each of the sections, with some sections often omitted. Candidates seemed to have the most difficulty recalling the order and key of vocal/fugal entries.

The identification of the tenor 1 part (as part of the trio of upper voices) in the first setting of the Agnus Dei was often only identified as the 'tenor,' and therefore, lost marks. In the second 'miserere' section, often candidates were able to identify the parallel 3rds in the soprano and alto parts, but also concluded that the same interval was being used in the soprano and bass parts (rather than compound 3rds.) The most common correct answers were the identification of the SATTB choir and the mention of the head motif. For some candidates, these were the only valid points made.

Weaker answers also began with an introduction, which invariably referenced the difficulties faced by the Catholic Church during this time. Also, a considerable number of candidates included a 'summary-style' conclusion at the end of the piece of writing, which generally just repeated points made earlier. Weaker answers included references to harmonic features, as nearly all candidates felt obliged to describe the types of cadences (imperfect, perfect, interrupted) and keys at the end of each phrase. These were not relevant and not always correct. Similarly 'tierce de Picardie cadences' were mentioned numerous times in the majority of essays but harmonic information was unnecessary and did not answer the context of the question. Many candidates need to sharpen their skill in referencing, rather than structuring their comments using vague openings such as "next" and "after this section". Some answers confused the Agnus Dei scoring and text with other set works, with references to Weelkes' 'Andalusian

Merchant' and the 'flying fishes.' At times overall structuring was poor, with attempts to base discussion on each aspect (scoring, texture and melody), being at the expense of specific references.

- (b) Several candidates performed in the top mark band and the third mark band respectively while an equal number achieved below half marks. Surprisingly few candidates were able to identify the double fugue, but were able to mention both the Kyrie and Christe Eleison subjects, heard simultaneously. Stronger candidates were able to identify the keys used, the circle of fifths and the changes of keys in the first stretto section accurately. These candidates were also successful at identifying the correct entries of voices in the various structural changes in the piece. Weaker candidates really struggled with this question, often mixing up the order of voices, or, typically, explaining the first section very well and then skipping to the last section, leaving out a large portion of points in the middle. Some candidates referred to a 'stretto' but in most cases this was out of context and was not very well referenced. Many candidates could mention harmonic features of the middle section and stretti, but found it difficult to specify the exact occurrence of these features. There was a vast inconsistency surrounding how to reference the text, with 'Christe' and 'Kyrie' texts often spelt incorrectly throughout the answer. Most answers implied pairing of subjects or voices, but only some candidates could recall which and in what order. The less successful responses contained a lot of inaccuracies and the weakest candidates referenced Mozart's piece as Handel's.

SECTION D Secular Vocal Music from 1600 to the Present Day

- Q4 (a) This was by far the most popular extended writing question and was handled with mixed levels of success. Answers placed in the top mark band made many musical points with an appropriate level of detail. The answer often worked its way sequentially through the recitative text, typically quoting the text in parallel with the suggested mood and detailing musical features which depicted this mood. Word painting examples were often given, without answering the brief of how these musical illustrations related to the changing moods. Some candidates did not state that Polyphemus was a bass, and in fact often stated that the solo voices was a baritone. Other answers did not state that the recitative was stromentato. Weaker candidates usually identified the use of the bass voice, the recitativo stromentato (though many referred to it as simply recitative), the furioso tempo markings, and the low F on 'capacious mouth.' Some candidates made more general statements, such as 'the tempo slows,' when more specific detail was needed, such as reference to the Adagio sections. Many candidates gained marks for the various points in relation to the return of the 'I burn' section, including the falling tritone, but unnecessary detail was added such as this being the 'Devil's chord' etc. Many candidates failed to gain a mark for 'diminished sevenths' as the appropriate section of text was not identified. Other candidates mentioned many changing keys, but did not encapsulate this in the feature of tonal instability, and appropriately referencing this to 'I burn'. There was much unnecessary detail in relation to the scoring of instruments, particularly the mention of the sopranino recorder and a further explanation of the following 'O Ruddier Than The Cherry' aria. Weaker submissions also gave a lengthy introduction based on background details regarding the fusion of styles, the English Masque, the Italian opera and the Germanic counterpoint. Again, this did little to answer the question.

- (b)** This question was less popular and performance in this question was generally fair with most answers displayed limited or superficial knowledge. The few successful responses contained detailed references to the presentation of the melody and the orchestration, commenting on how Copland manipulates the orchestration with effects and techniques to achieve his distinct sonorities and timbre. Very few candidates were able to identify this as being an extract from a Shaker song and many candidates misidentified the soloist as a bass singer. Very few candidates were able to identify the various sections of the song in order to attach appropriate points to each section. Marks were lost for 'Ab and Eb harmonics in the harp', if they were not assigned to the appropriate section of text. Many candidates noted the opening instrumentation of the three woodwind instruments. However, some answers neglected to mention the added detail of these instruments being presented in octaves/unison. A number of answers highlighted the prefiguration of the chorus, but few recalled the viola or clarinet pre-figuring the second statement of the melody. Little detail was recalled about the first verse, apart from sustained strings and woodwind. Some candidates highlighted the addition of the double bass, flute and oboe on the repeat of the verse, and a small number of candidates mentioned the final fragment of the melody in bassoon and cello, and the harp *pres de la table*.

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