GCE

**Chief Examiner's and
Principal Moderator's Report**

Music

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2019 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 section on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCE MUSIC

Chief Examiner's Report

Introduction

Candidate performance in the two practical based units continues to be of a high standard, with the majority of candidates scoring in the mid to top bands in the performance and composition units. The performance of candidates was notably stronger in the Test of Aural Perception papers compared to the Written Examinations. Across both papers, it was disappointing to see, at times, very low marks in questions relating to set works which the candidates have studied throughout the year. As well as a lack of basic knowledge of the key features of set works, most of the other main areas where candidates lost marks were the same as in previous years' papers and are highlighted throughout the reports.

Assessment Unit AS 1   Performing

Overview

The majority of candidates were in the Grade 6+ level. There were a few performances that were Grade 5, and generally they performed well at this level. Traditional players usually performed at Grade 6+ standard, but there were some instances where candidates claimed Grade 6+ but the actual performance was more Grade 4/5 due to a lack of ornamentation or the simplicity of the dance tunes and airs performed. Singers choosing pop songs should not assume that they are always Grade 6+.

The vast majority of students were able to access marks in Mark Bands 3 and 4. There were a few pianists in Mark Band 2 and it was obvious that the programme was too difficult for them. String players often lost marks for pitching and intonation. Brass players often found it difficult to maintain their stamina levels at the end of their programmes resulting in mis-pitching.

Overall, the standard was high and teachers and candidates were able to choose a suitable programme that adequately reflected the true ability of the candidate.

Variety of Instruments/voices

The full range of orchestral instruments was examined. Traditional instruments were also popular with tin whistle, guitar, pipes and accordion being the most popular. There continues to be many candidates offering piano, violin, flute, clarinet and voice as their performance media.

Repertoire

Repertoire was varied and usually taken from one of the examination boards. Some pianists moved away from the standard examination repertoire with much success, especially in the expressive element. Many singers continue to opt for a musical theatre programme and many scored well, particularly in the expressive element. However, there were a pleasing number of classical singers as well and they too achieved success with carefully chosen repertoire. Some of the popular songs chosen were not as successful due to repetitive phrases offering a limited pitch range. As there are only a few graded pop songs, candidates were not always aware of the criteria for performing at a Grade 6+ level, and some fell short of this standard. Traditional programmes were usually of a high standard but candidates should try to link tunes together. Ornamentation also needs to be of a high standard in these programmes.

Level of preparation

Most programmes are now well within the 5 - 7 minute parameters with just three performances under 5 minutes. There are still some centres where the majority of candidates are performing over the 7 minute limit, with some up to 10 minutes. This often was self-penalising as candidates had more room for error or ran out of stamina. All centres seemed to be well set up for the examination and with the exception of a very small number of centres, all CAFs were completed before the examiner arrived.

Viva Voce

The standard of question responses were well prepared by most candidates. There were still quite a few centres where it was clear that pupils had not been given any assistance in preparing for this element. On the other hand, many centres were extremely well prepared and easily accessed the maximum marks. The technical challenges question was generally well answered but the comments on the influence of recordings tends to be a little vague. Too often answers focus on dynamics and tempo.

At AS Level, candidates should be able to analyse a performance in more detail. Some centres had very long Vivas (up to 16 minutes in length) and in many centres the viva was longer than the performance. Some candidates eventually got to the musical detail and were duly awarded, however they should not need 10 - 12 minutes to achieve a full mark viva. In other instances candidates offering 3 songs for example, spoke for 4 - 5 minutes on each song, which was excessive.

Accompanists

On the whole, accompanists were very competent. There were quite a few centres where examiners felt the accompanist was a little heavy-handed, and a few centres with a very bright sounding pianos which did not help. However, the majority of accompanists did not adversely affect the performance of any candidate.

Use of technology

No issues with technology were reported this year. Centres were well informed about the use of mobile phones and all backing tracks were on CDs.

Overall experience

The examining experience was very positive with centres being well-organised and welcoming. Most teachers had printed Candidate Assessment Forms completed and candidates were well organised. Teachers were pleasant and most of the examiners had a very enjoyable experience.

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit AS 21   Composing: Composition Task

Overview

60 centres entered candidates for this unit of work, of which six were consortiums. Of these, 6 centres had their marks amended to moderator's marks and 17 centres had their marks adjusted, with the largest adjustment being minus 14 marks. 37 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 a good insight into the working methods of individual candidates. However, in some instances the comments made did not reflect the marks awarded. Teachers should note that in their comments, using wording taken directly from the marking criteria is not always particularly insightful in terms of individual compositions.

Submissions

Once again there was a variety of styles and genres submitted and a variety of instruments and combinations included. 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. When 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 incorporate them into their own work, which enhanced the overall sense of style of the composition. Candidates who did not have an appropriate focus from the outset were less successful and often lacked a clear sense of style and purpose.

Generally, there were fewer examples of incidental pieces this year and also fewer pieces written for large combinations of orchestral instruments. These pieces do not always meet the requirements of the mark scheme.

The online uploading of MP3 files was again successful this year and streamlined the moderation process.

Criterion 1: Creation, Development and Organisation of Ideas

This continues to be the most challenging section for candidates. 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. Ternary form continues to be the most popular structure in which to compose, allowing for sufficient development, unity and variety.

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 and fragmentation. Less successful compositions often lacked a sense of coherent melodic content throughout.

Criterion 2: Use of Resources

This, as in previous years was more successful than Criterion 1. Candidates scoring in Mark Bands 3 and 4 were writing idiomatically and stylistically and had explored the full range of their chosen instruments. When writing for a solo instrument, candidates should be mindful of the limitations in terms of textural variety and interest. The most successful compositions showed an understanding of the use of texture to provide interest and variety in the piece. The highest marks were awarded to compositions where candidates appeared to be familiar with and have experience of the instrumental or vocal forces for which they were writing. Most candidates were placed in Mark Band 3 in this criterion.

Criterion 3: Harmonic handling

Harmonic handling was generally fluent. The most successful compositions displayed a good level of harmonic handling and included the more sophisticated chords expected at this level, such as added 7th and diminished chords, combined with the correct use of chord inversions and clearly prepared cadence points. There were some successful Irish Traditional compositions submitted, with a small number of candidates achieving top band marks in this criterion as they had included extended chords and not relied totally on primary chords.

Criterion 4: Commentaries

The majority of commentaries adhered to the prescribed format. While some commentaries gave an analytical overview of the composition, the majority were quite general and lacked substantive detail relating to the piece. Often, information appeared in the incorrect section. Frequently, although the commentary was well-written, the information included was not a true reflection of the composition.

Commentaries were mostly within the required length of 1000 words. However, some teachers did not acknowledge commentaries which were significantly over this limit, and need to be mindful that, in these cases, marks in the top mark band cannot be awarded.

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. All samples were clearly audible and well presented.

While it became obvious during the course of the moderating process that composition for many pupils 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.

Assessment Unit AS 22   Composing: Composition with Technology Task

Submissions

There were a variety of compositions presented from classical inspired pieces to dance, Romantic, 20th century, rock, and film music style. Irish Traditional was the most popular. Most of these were highly stylistic and idiomatic for the chosen instruments.

Some centres submit compositions which use mostly the same instrumentation, same stimulus chosen, same form and same style. This can be restrictive for students depending on their particular instrument/genre that they are interested in. It would be beneficial to candidates for teachers to encourage differing stylistic choices within a centre.

Both stimuli were popular, and unlike last year, most centres' candidates submitted a mixture of stimuli rather than the teacher selecting/encouraging one stimulus in particular to be used.

Criterion 1: Creation/Development of Ideas Based on a Stimulus

In terms of creation and development of ideas, there is room for improvement. Some compositions really struggled to establish clear melodic progression/development, and relied too heavily on repeated statements of the stimulus. At the other extreme, candidates are sometimes over ambitious, try to accomplish too much and therefore lose a sense of unity due to too many ideas. There was some very clever manipulation of the stimulus but this should not be to the detriment of a sense of melodic coherence.

The most popular form/structure to use, and the most successful, was ternary form. Candidates also used binary form and theme and variations.

Teachers should always try and explain why they have deducted marks. It was found that teachers, in general, marked slightly too leniently across all criterion, but especially Criterion 1.

Criterion 2: Use of harmony

For Criterion 2, the majority of marks fell into Mark Band 3. The harmonic language used was generally good but many candidates were unable to access the top mark bands due to a lack of extended chords, lack of modulation and harmonic devices used coherently and for development. The candidates should aim for Mark bands 3 and 4 and ensure that the harmonic writing is secure. Top mark band candidates showed a sophisticated handling of harmony, with a secure understanding of chord progressions and cadential writing.

Teachers' marking was found to be generally accurate for this criterion, and useful comments were provided.

Criterion 3: Use of Technology, including Texture and Timbre

For Criterion 3, centres often only marked for the use of technology, forgetting that the use of texture and timbre also comes under this criterion. This was the criterion where most marks were adjusted and candidates fell outside of the acceptable range.

For technology, candidates must take time throughout and at the end of the compositional process to mix their composition well. It was found that panning was often extreme, balance issues present and there was a lack of dynamic and tempo variety being used carefully and idiomatically.

In some cases there was an excellent use of texture and timbre. However, some textures were sparse and the four parts required at AS level were not fully explored. In these cases candidates shied away from use of the full ensemble and therefore missed out on opportunities for melodic and harmonic development. In general, the choices of ensemble were typical of the chosen style and some of the part writing was idiomatic. When editing the individual instrumental lines on the software, candidates should listen to them one-by-one and consider: does this sound like the actual instrument? What do I need to consider for this type of instrument? Would this instrument actually play this type of part in an ensemble? Have I shared the melody?

Criterion 4: Commentary

Candidates often failed to specify which stimulus they had chosen as the basis for their composition. Commentaries tended to be analytical and detailed, with specific examples provided. At times, there was confusion over where information should be included, particularly in relation to the development of ideas and use of chosen resources. Resources refer to instruments and how they are used to achieve timbral/textural contrast. It should be noted that there is a penalty for commentaries outside the 1000 word limit. In general, the candidates gave insightful information into the processes undertaken. Some pitfalls were: not giving a musical example for their influences in Section 1, (e.g. what musical feature(s) has the candidate included from a composer/group/style) and not giving enough specific detail about their use of the instruments in Section 4. There were some cases where candidates did not fully analyse their melodic ideas and subsequent development of these in Section 2. In Section 5, in relation to the use of technology, the comments often read like a set of definitions of the different technology techniques used, rather than providing information specific to the candidate's piece. Candidates should explain what panning and type of reverb they have applied to their chosen ensemble, and give reasons for their musical choices.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 31   Responding to Music: Test of Aural Perception

Overview

This was an accessible and well structured paper, allowing all candidates an opportunity to display their knowledge of the set works. The paper assessed three set works and two unfamiliar pieces of music; one instrumental work and one choral work. There continues to be a wide range of responses resulting in marks awarded from very low to very high. Set work questions were not as well answered as expected. Some candidates lack sufficient knowledge to answer perceptively on pieces of unfamiliar music and are unable to access higher marks in these questions. The focus of certain questions continues to be overlooked, for example, in Question 2, Part (d) and Question 3, Part (c), where candidates gave details of melodic and textural features and therefore could not gain credit. There was sufficient time for all candidates to answer the paper.

Q1   **Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in Eb major (Eroica) Mt. 4, Extract A, Bars 12-43, Extract B, Bars 44-59**

This question was generally well answered. The majority of candidates correctly identified the key in (a). Answers for (b) were reasonably successful, with "pizzicato" and "strings" being well identified. Some candidates answered "lower strings" and therefore could not be credited. Part (c) was well answered with many candidates gaining 2 or more marks here. Answers to (d) were commonly "theme and variation" which was incorrect. Candidates should note that answers of "AB", "AABB" etc. were not accepted as alternatives to "binary". Answers to (e) were less successful due to lack of specific detail. The theme was often identified in the violin, but could not be credited without the accurate detail of "second violin". "Countermelody" was a common incorrect answer, with only a small minority of candidates identifying "counterpoint". Answers to (f) and (g) were correctly answered on the whole, although "rondo" was a common incorrect answer for (f) and some candidates gave an answer of "Romantic" for (g).

Q2   **Mendelssohn: Hear my Prayer, Bars 173-198**

Part (a) was well answered and most candidates were able to identify "rising sequence" in (b). However, fewer were able to identify "suspension" and many circled "tonic pedal" in error. A small number of candidates circled three answers instead of two, and therefore lost a mark. Answers to (c) were as frequently incorrect as they were correct. Few were able to identify "perfect" as the correct cadence with "imperfect" a common incorrect answer here. Part (d) was generally well answered, although some responses referenced melodic or textural features, showing a lack of focus on the question. Parts (e) and (f) were well answered on the whole, with the majority of candidates gaining at least 2 marks in (f)(ii). The period of composition in (g) was well answered. However, "verse anthem" was often answered incorrectly in (g)(ii). This is a specific genre in its own right and therefore could not be credited.

Q3   **Schönberg and Boubil: "One Day More" from Les Misérables, Bars 1-27[1]**

This question was not answered quite so well. It was a common error in (a) for candidates to write "piano" rather than keyboard and this could not be credited. Some candidates gave abbreviated answers of "RH keyboard" or "LH keyboard". These abbreviations were not accepted. "Bell tree" and "chimes" were other

common errors and as these are both different instruments, no credit could be given. Parts (b) and (c) were well answered, as was (d), with "soprano" being well identified, although "bass" was a common error. Some candidates failed to give sufficient details of the orchestration in (e), stating use of "drum kit" which was not specific enough to gain credit. Other common incorrect answers included irrelevant detail, showing a lack of focus on the orchestral accompaniment aspect of the question.

Q4   J.S. Bach: Concerto for Oboe and Violin in C minor, Mt. 1, Bars 1-33[1]

This unfamiliar piece of music was well answered. Most candidates correctly identified melodic features in (a). "Trill" and "descending sequence" were very well answered, although "imitation" was a common incorrect answer. Part (b) was very well answered, but "clarinet" was a frequent error in (c). "Violin" was well identified. "Modulation to subdominant" was the most common incorrect answer given in (d). Parts (e) and (f)(i) were well answered. Candidates commonly answered "harpsichord" in (f)(ii), instead of including the necessary detail of "continuo". It should be noted that "prominence of strings" was not accepted. There was some tendency to provide general Baroque features of the music without reference to the instrumental scoring focus of the question.

Q5   John Rutter: Choral Fanfare, Bars 16-48

Part (a) saw a variety of responses and was generally not well done, but Part (b) was well answered. Part (c) was poorly answered, with few candidates able to link musical features with the line numbers. Singing "in thirds" was not enough information to gain credit due to the specific nature of the question. Part (d) was mostly correctly answered, with (e) being less well answered. Many candidates confused the types of voice being heard. However, some candidates received credit for "lower voices only". Part (f) was well answered, but it was rare to credit two full marks in (g). "Dotted rhythm" was a frequent error, but "syncopation" was the most commonly credited answer. Part (h) had a variety of responses and "musical" was a common error.

Assessment Unit AS 32   Responding to Music: Written Examination

Overview

This paper was a fair test for candidates of varying abilities and contained an appropriate range of questions relating to set works and one unfamiliar score extract. Incorrect notation of chords in Questions 1 and 2 was a common cause for loss of marks, with continuing confusion between "A major 7" and "A7" which suggests candidates need to be more familiar with chord labelling conventions. Candidates continue to score better in the unfamiliar score question than they do in the set work question. Extended writing questions provided accessible options across both sacred and secular vocal music set works, and the answers to Question 3 tended to be stronger overall than the answers to Question 4. Fewer candidates are writing lengthy and irrelevant introductions and conclusions. These are frequently too general in nature, do not answer the question and should be avoided. Candidates seemed to be less able to articulate the specific features required from the question, whether it is jazz and Latin American features in Question 4(a), or melodic features in Question 4(b). Across all four extended writing questions, candidates continue to provide information that is not relevant to the question. Use of abbreviations continues to be a cause for loss of marks, for example, "sax" instead of "saxophone" in Question 4 Part (a). Candidates must also remember to reference the text in their answers when making a point to access more marks.

Some candidates only attempted one written question, but all candidates answered both score questions. Additional booklets were less frequently attached to scripts than in previous years, perhaps indicating that candidates are complying more with mark schemes and striving to conform to the success criteria of an extended writing answer rather than an essay. Insufficient and limited responses to Questions 3 and 4 suggested a lack of knowledge and revision rather than a lack of time, as there is clearly sufficient time allowed for candidates to complete this paper.

Q1   Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E^b major K543, first movement, Bars 143-179

Many candidates performed poorly in this question. Part (c), key identification, Part (d)(ii), developmental techniques and Part (e) chord analysis, showed a great breadth of differentiation. Part (a) was successfully answered with the majority of candidates securing the correct answer. Part (b) was mostly understood, although some candidates struggled to identify the development section. Answers of "developmental" were not accepted and incorrect answers frequently quoted "recapitulation", "bridge", or letters and numbers, such as "Section A" or "second subject". Part (c) was poorly answered with most candidates unable to get all three keys correct. C minor was commonly confused with C major. Very few candidates gained a mark in Part (d)(i) with "contradanse" being a common error. The countermelody was poorly identified in Part (d)(ii) and most candidates were unable to identify all three developmental techniques. Key, chord and position/inversion were poorly answered in Part (e). The majority of candidates have not assimilated chord labelling convention with too many unacceptable answers such as "Eb major 7", "Eb dominant 7", "Eb dom 7" etc. Part (f) was fairly well answered, although many candidates misunderstood the question, citing string techniques and not textures. Part (g) was not successfully answered by candidates who could not identify the type of chord, merely guessing "diminished" or "dominant 7th" and writing this for both answers. "Diminished 7th" was not accepted. The cadence was reasonably well identified in Part (g), although "perfect" was a frequent incorrect answer.

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Q2 Mozart: String Quartet No. 21 in D, Mt. 3, Bars 1-30

Candidates performed moderately well in this question, which proved to be the best answered question on the paper. Part (a), chord and position/inversion, Part (d), presentation and development of the opening melody and Part (f), melodic features, proved effective questions for differentiation. Part (a) was not well answered, with too many candidates answering "A major 7". The ability level of candidates was clearly seen in the responses. Part (b) was understood but there were a range of correct and incorrect letters and tonalities. Identification of the ornament was moderately successful in Part (c), although some candidates mistakenly gave answers detailing articulation. Few candidates could accurately describe the opening phrase, which was mostly used for development from Bar 16. Many candidates discussed the accompaniment, dynamics and articulation, which were irrelevant. Candidates should focus on the melody rather than the supporting parts in this type of question, and practise the skill of describing the melody with the most suitable specialist terms as opposed to simply stating (beat by beat) what they see. There were some accurate descriptions of fragmentation, but without the use of the specialist vocabulary, no credit could be given. The relationship between first and second violins, and the viola and cello, were considered by higher level candidates, who were more inclusive in their understanding of the term "development". Parts (e) and (f) were well answered, although the repetition "down an octave" was less well identified. The key and cadence in Part (g) were generally well answered, but Part (h) was very poorly done. Very few candidates secured a mark, with the majority giving answers of "waltz".

Q3 (a) Handel: Zadok the Priest

This question seemed to be a more popular option than Question (b) in this section of the paper. Many candidates were able to identify the key, metre and treatment of the word "rejoic'd", along with accurate comments about the word setting and texture. Differentiation was seen where candidates were able to identify accurate scoring and repetition of tonic/dominant harmonies. Candidates were credited for the use of specialist musical vocabulary in the correct context, when discussing either the specific words in the middle section, or when discussing melodic and rhythmic features. More able candidates had coherent answers, whereas, less able candidates often simply listed the features without reference to the text or orchestration. Lack of correct detail was an issue, for example, many candidates wrote "SSAATTBB choir", instead of "SAATB choir". Many struggled to correctly identify instruments, with reference to "brass fanfare" rather than "trumpet fanfare". There was insufficient knowledge of the scoring for these candidates to recall that there are only trumpets and not a full brass section. Abbreviations for "forte", such as "f", were not accepted, and there sometimes was a lack of musical vocabulary used, e.g. "loud" instead of "forte". Many candidates spent time writing detail about unnecessary historical context, which gained no credit and did not answer the question. Some candidates went on to discuss an incorrect section, or the next section of music, which was not the focus of the question, and again, gained no credit. Higher scoring responses included a greater breadth of information. Candidates who could maintain clarity and coherence in their explanations tended to be regarded more highly in terms of the quality of written communication.

Q3 (b) Gibbons: This is the Record of John

This question seemed to be more challenging, with responses tending to be weaker and gaining fewer marks than answers to Question (a) in this section of the paper. Candidates generally struggled to structure their answers and detail tended to be missing, for example, "rising and falling sequence" without reference to the text or section of music being discussed. Answers generally tended to be short. Some

candidates mistakenly discussed the next section of the piece, without reading and absorbing the focus of the question on the "first solo verse". It was a common error to simply list the musical features, without accurate descriptions. Phrases were often incorrectly referenced or too generally described. A small number of candidates strove to quote musical features down to the correct syllable. Candidates were most successful in identifying the opening organ prefiguration of the male alto entry, the ascending sequence of "from Jerusalem" and the melisma on "I". Some candidates noted the key, use of suspensions and prominent use of primary triads. Very few candidates could give examples of where suspensions occurred in the first verse or were able to accurately reference or quantify which pitches were repeated or moved by step. It was common for candidates to misquote the text by supplying a whole phrase rather than the exact word at which the feature actually occurs. Less coherent responses listed basic tonality and Renaissance features without reference to where they occurred in the first verse.

Q4. **(a) Bernstein: 'Tonight Quintet'**

There was a more even spread of answers across Questions 4(a) and (b). Candidates had moderate success in identifying a variety of jazz and Latin American features, with many mentioning stand-alone answers. Only a minority of candidates were able to locate where these features occurred in the Quintet verse. Some candidates found it difficult to distinguish between 20th century musical traits and jazz and Latin American traits. Generally marks were limited by superficial answers and not linking the music to the text, and many candidates wrote about the characterisation of the piece. Few candidates wrote specifically about the riffs/ostinato, and the 3+3+2 crotchets against the prevailing 2/2 metre after "Tonight". There was little mention of Blues melodic features, although many candidates referred to the added note chords. However, this could not be credited without a correct example, e.g. 9th chords. Commonly identified features were glissandi, lip smears and the swung and beguine rhythms. Candidates could often locate the context of these features, thus gaining extra credit. Less common, but still acknowledged, were features such as scoring, muting and use of repeated patterns. Candidates could name a small handful of different instruments used in a pit band, but found it difficult to encompass all the instruments.

Q4. **(b) Kern: 'Ol' Man River**'

Similar to Question 4(a), responses to this question were only moderately successful. A frequent issue was a lack of clarity in the answers, primarily due to the vast majority of candidates failing to give specific detail connected to the melodic features mentioned. As with Question 3(a) and 3(b), there were some candidates who discussed an entirely different section of the text. Keys were generally correctly identified, but a frequent lack of detail, such as "this section has repetition, a motif, and a descending sequence", failed to gain credit without reference to the correct lyrics of the theme discussed. A common error was to discuss an interval of a 4th in the second theme, instead of correctly stating that the opening motif in this theme "spans a 4th". The skills in accurately describing the melody were not always evident. Most candidates recognised the features of syncopation and repetition, but many did not give accurate examples of these. Higher level responses were clearly structured and based on a chronological description of each theme. More credit was given to those responses which described an exact location within each theme, by word or phrase, and were able to describe this succinctly using correct musical terminology. Weaker responses failed to locate the correct location or part of a bar/phrase. Similarly, candidates were able to identify the correct part of theme, but then struggled to describe the melodic features.

Assessment Unit A2 1   Performing

Standard of Performance

The majority of candidates were well prepared for their performance examination and there was frequently a level of enjoyment evident to examiners. All candidates engaged in discussion about their programme and displayed knowledge of their instrument and the music performed. Many candidates scored well in this unit. The marks awarded ranged from full marks to approximately half marks. Similar to previous years, some candidates were performing beyond the required standard for A2, displaying high levels of fluency and musical maturity. It was encouraging to see a continued high level of musicianship from some candidates.

The organisation by teachers at each centre was greatly beneficial for candidates and examiners alike. Many teachers were well prepared, providing examiners with a timetable for the day, allowing an appropriate 25 minutes per candidate at A2. Candidate Assessment Forms were printed in advance, with the mark scheme on the back of the form, which was extremely helpful and more time efficient during the visit.

Variety of instruments

Most commonly examined this year were vocalists. There was also a large number of candidates who performed on piano, violin, clarinet and electric guitar. There were fewer brass and lower stringed instruments than in recent years. Irish traditional players performed on fiddle, whistle and harp. There was a small number of candidates who performed on bagpipes.

Repertoire

The repertoire performed was largely taken from syllabus listings for examinations of Grade 6 and above. Vocalists performed within a range of styles: classical, opera, operetta, oratorio, and occasionally dipping into classic musicals. Other vocalists performed within the area of Musical Theatre and modern musicals, showcasing their interpretive and dramatic skills during the performance. Pianists and orchestral instrumentalists performed within the classical and modern classical folk repertoire, with light jazz and blues style pieces appearing in some programmes also. Guitarists and drummers performed a range of classic and heavy rock pieces. Irish traditional players presented a suitable repertoire containing a slow air and dances of differing metre and tempo.

Candidates should ensure that there is sufficient contrast within their programme, allowing examiners to see the full range of their capabilities and appropriately assess and make detailed comments on both technical and expressive aspects of the mark scheme.

Criterion 1: Technical Control and Accuracy

Most candidates gained marks in band 3 or band 4. Lack of attention to intonation was the most common cause of loss of marks in this criterion. The majority of candidates paid attention to tuning before the examination; however, candidates should not be afraid to tune in between pieces once the performance has started. The level of musical fluency should also be considered. Candidates should not dwell on one or two small errors of pitch, but rather, think about the overall shape of the performance that they give.

Criterion 2: Expressive Interpretation, Sense of Style and Communication

Again, most marks awarded were in band 3 or band 4. At the upper end, there was a

very strong understanding of the music performed and a high level of musical maturity displayed by some candidates. There was often an appropriate use of dynamic shaping and other musical conventions in order to communicate expression and style. Vocalists should take care that there is enough focus on the expression, beyond the theatrical elements. Naturally, it is understood that in the musical theatre genre, there is a certain amount of expression that is visual, but the main focus should be on the musical elements, otherwise, candidates risk losing marks in this criterion.

Criterion 3: Viva Voce

Class teachers, in the majority of cases played an active role in the preparation of candidates for this part of the examination. All candidates were aware of the questions they would be asked this year, and had prepared their responses in advance. A very small number of candidates fell into Mark Band 1, with a very large majority of candidates displaying some, good or excellent knowledge of their chosen programme. Candidates frequently struggle to be concise, with the result that some viva voce examinations were 15 minutes or more in length. Candidates should try to be succinct in their responses. Biographical detail about a composer, or the story line of a musical is largely irrelevant and will never result in extra marks being gained.

Level of Demand

All candidates performed above the minimum standard (Grade 5) required for A2. The majority of performances were Grade 7 standard and above, gaining full marks in this criterion of the mark scheme. Teachers and candidates should ensure that the repertoire chosen is within the capabilities of the performer. It is counterproductive to present a programme that is technically insecure, simply to gain an additional 3 marks in the level of demand criterion. Candidates may perform pieces that differ in standard, e.g. one Grade 5 piece and two Grade 6 pieces. The marks for the level of demand are determined by the timings of the programme and the standard which makes up the majority of the performance.

Timing

Candidates had planned their performances well and were almost always within the 8 – 10 minute time allowance. A handful of candidates did not perform for long enough and therefore, received a time penalty. However, it was more common for candidates to run over time. Whilst there is no time penalty for performing for more than 10 minutes, it can often affect stamina and therefore have an impact on pitch accuracy and intonation. This affects the marks awarded, and therefore teachers should encourage candidates to plan the length of their programme accordingly.

Use of technology

All use of technology for A2 performances was within the guidelines. Backing tracks were most commonly accessed from CD recordings but where a computer had to be used, it was disconnected from the Internet.

General points to note

It is important to pay attention to the set up of the room, with an appropriate line of communication between the soloist and accompanist.

Those candidates using backing tracks, microphones and amps should take time to sound check and feel content with the balance of the sound before they perform. Please try to anticipate any technical issues and have spare leads to hand.

Pianos should be tuned before the examination period.

The standard of accompanists is generally very good, with skilled and supportive musicianship often in evidence. Candidates should have had an appropriate number of rehearsals with their accompanists prior to their examination.

If at all possible, please arrange that there are no school bells ringing in the examination room. The sound of a bell can be hard to avoid in a school environment, but if possible, try to create some distance from it, so as not to disturb performances.

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit A2 21   Composing: Composition Task

Overview

In total, 58 centres including six consortiums submitted work in this unit for moderation.

At the post-moderation stage, 19 centres were adjusted, 6 centres were amended to moderator marks and 33 centres had no adjustment. This represents an improvement from the statistics of the previous year. Furthermore, the standard of centre marking has improved from previous years.

The total number of candidates entered for the unit was 242, achieving marks ranging from 53/53 at the high end to 17/53 at the low end.

Submissions

Submissions covered an array of musical styles and genres ranging from pieces influenced by the Baroque, Classical and Romantic compositional idioms to examples of jazz, traditional folk and pop styles. In particular, there was a marked increase this year in the number of submissions composed in a variety of jazz and jazz-adjacent styles, while fewer traditional Irish pieces were in evidence. Compositions for vocal performance included SATB choral pieces and songs influenced by or classifiable as musical theatre, folk and pop songs. A good variety of instrumental combinations were included across the compositions submitted, with the string quartet remaining the most popular choice as in previous years. A number of candidates opted to compose instrumental solo pieces accompanied by piano while others chose to write pieces for solo piano.

All of the compositions submitted were accompanied by audio recordings of a consistently good quality. While only a handful of the submissions exceeded the three-minute time limit, a significant number of commentaries received were in excess of the 1,200-word limit.

All compositions were produced using Sibelius, GarageBand or Logic software.

Style

The majority of the compositions submitted evidenced a clear sense of style and a coherent formal structure. In general, when a clear genre was outlined, candidates were more likely to fulfil their brief successfully by translating the musical characteristics of their chosen styles into their own compositions.

Weaker candidates tended to demonstrate a comparative lack of clarity regarding their initial intentions, and their compositions consequently tended to lose a sense of direction and structure as the pieces progressed. It is imperative that candidates should take care to identify features of their chosen style and ensure that these are incorporated effectively into

their work. A minority of candidates submitted work that was inconsistent with or bereft of any distinctive or discrete musical style.

The majority of centres allowed candidates to work within a style or genre with which they were familiar, or in which they had an interest and this is to be encouraged. Conversely, all of the work produced by some centres was written in the same musical style – most commonly jazz pieces, popular songs or string quartets. Generally, these compositions also tended to follow an identical formal and harmonic structure.

Candidates are advised to be circumspect when selecting to compose neoclassical or serial pieces as the features of these are comparatively more challenging, or more abstract idioms often fail to fulfil many of the requirements of the marking criteria.

Criterion 1: Creation, Development and Organisation of Ideas

Structure

Ternary form was the most popular formal structure in the majority of the instrumental compositions submitted, although rondo, variation and sonata form also featured, the latter in particular with varying degrees of success. It should be noted that sonata form is an ambitious structure to select at this level and should perhaps only be attempted by the most proficient candidates.

For pieces which relied on ternary form, Section A was generally the most successful, with Section B providing some contrast of musical material. However, there was frequently a relative lack of appropriate development of ideas in the returning Section A, with some compositions featuring A and A1 sections which were almost identical.

Candidates who selected variation form were most successful when their initial musical idea was strong and memorable. The first and second variations were generally of a good standard but additional variations tended to be less successful.

The majority of songs followed a strophic structure. In most songs this structure was clearly defined with the expected verse – chorus – bridge inclusions. However, some songs lacked a coherent structure, often consisting of one verse followed by numerous repetitions of the chorus. Pop songs often suffered from a lack of appropriate development at the required level, often relying heavily on repetition; candidates are advised that while this approach to song-writing and composition may be commonplace in contemporary mainstream popular music, it will not satisfy the academic criteria for this unit. Many songs featured original lyrics written by the candidate while others were based on pre-existing texts.

While choral writing is an ambitious undertaking, some candidates were able to produce excellent and highly successful examples of this genre. Live recordings greatly enhanced these submissions. However, the software limitations inherent in Sibelius recordings of choral pieces rarely did the composition justice. Most choral pieces were structured in ternary form, allowing for adequate development of ideas. However, a small number continued to be through-composed with new ideas introduced throughout rather than progressive development of the initial ideas.

Melody

The importance of a strong initial melodic idea, which facilitates future development, cannot be understated. In general, melodic ideas were created successfully, mostly in balanced phrasing and with appropriate shape and fluency. However, weaker compositions often lacked fluent or well-phrased melodic material from the outset.

Development

Developmental techniques in evidence ranged from repetition, decoration and countermelody to more imaginative examples featuring augmentation, diminution, sequence and imitative ideas. While imaginative and effective development of musical ideas is important, candidates are advised to ensure that they do not include too many devices and as a result lose an overall sense of musicality in their compositions.

Criterion 2: Use of Resources

It is important to note that Criterion 2 requires that consideration is given to both **texture** and **timbre**. The majority of compositions featured appropriately idiomatic instrumental and vocal writing. However, in certain instances, individual parts were not particularly imaginative and failed to explore the full technical abilities or pitch range of the voice or instrument.

Candidates are advised to present live recordings of their compositions wherever possible to ensure that the notated pitches are accessible for their chosen instruments or voices. On occasions, candidates submitted scores which were not playable by the suggested instrument.

The most successful compositions manipulated texture to create contrast and variety while conversely, many pieces lacked sufficient textural variety and some featured very busy textures throughout the composition.

Criterion 3: Harmonic Handling

It is important that centres refer to the GCSE/GCE Music – Progression of Compositional Skills document available on the CCEA website when considering this criterion to ensure that candidates are using the more sophisticated harmonic vocabulary required at A2 level. It is also vital that candidates carefully select their compositional style to ensure that all the harmonic requirements are fulfilled. This can often be particularly difficult to achieve in traditional Irish or Classical period pieces.

In general, most candidates demonstrated a good level of harmonic handling, the majority achieving a mark in band 3. These compositions had a clear sense of harmonic pulse and progression, made some use of chordal extensions as appropriate to the chosen style, explored tonality through tonal shifts and correctly executed modulations. Candidates scoring in Mark Band 4 used harmony imaginatively and effectively, incorporating chromaticism, more advanced chordal extensions and moves to remote keys via carefully prepared modulations in their compositions.

Centres should note that the use of pre-existing chord patterns, including 12-bar blues, is not advisable at A2 level.

Criterion 4: Commentary

All commentaries were presented using the pro forma provided by CCEA. A significant number of these exceeded the permitted 1,200-word limit and consequently could not achieve a mark in the top band. Consequently, there were comparatively few commentaries overall that were awarded full marks. Most were well-written and provided a satisfactory overview of the composition. However, fewer gave an analytical and reflective account of the piece which went beyond a basic descriptive summary. Weaker commentaries often had information in the wrong section and tended to use basic language rather than technical musical terminology.

Generally, a limited amount of information was presented relating to the context and style

of the composition. Candidates who were most successful in this section were able to relate the melodic, harmonic and instrumental or vocal styles, and traits of influential works and composers which had influenced them into their own piece.

The most successful commentaries clearly explained the structure of the composition and the creation and development of melodic ideas, with reference to bar numbers on an accompanying score, or to timings in the recording. It should be noted that in the absence of a score, bar numbers are of limited use. Furthermore, if accurate timestamps are not included clearly in the commentary (particularly in the absence of a written score) the progress of the composition can be difficult to follow.

The majority of songs were accompanied by a clear lead-sheet, containing both lyrics and chords. This, along with the addition of a score for instrumental and choral pieces, is a useful tool for the moderating process.

In Section 3 of the commentary, many candidates included irrelevant information relating to the types of microphone or music notation software they had used, rather than commenting on how the chosen instruments or voices are used in terms of their role and timbre, and how they have been used to create and vary the musical texture of the piece.

In Section 4, more reference generally could have been made to the harmonic devices incorporated into the work, rather than merely describing tonal centres and listing the chords used.

It should be noted that the commentary should be presented predominantly in prose rather than all table form, to optimise the marks which can be awarded for use of English.

Teacher Comments

Teacher comments were included for almost all candidates, and ranged from comprehensive information relating to each composition, to very brief general comments which quoted directly from the mark scheme. The best teacher comments explained not only why marks had been awarded but also why marks had been withheld. In a number of instances teacher comments suggested that a composition was more sophisticated than was actually the case.

Application of the Criteria

Teachers' assessments varied considerably, with some centres submitting marks which were an accurate and a fair interpretation of the work of the candidates, while others awarded marks that suggested a level of sophistication on the part of the candidate that was not evident when the work was investigated during the moderation process. In these centres, marks awarded were generally outside of the acceptable range and were amended, or adjusted, accordingly.

In centres with the greatest discrepancy between marks awarded by teachers and then adjusted in moderation, it is suggested that these centres may not be fully aware of the expected progression in compositional skills from GCSE through to AS and A2 level. A number of candidates submitted work for A2 which could only be expected to gain modest marks at GCSE level.

Criterion 1: Creation, development and organisation of ideas

This criterion tended to be marked leniently. The majority of pieces had some sense of style and structure and in general melodic writing was fluent. However, musical ideas often lacked imaginative development and tended to rely on repetition.

Criterion 2: Use of resources

This criterion tended to be applied reasonably accurately. Candidates need to ensure that instrumental and vocal parts are idiomatic and imaginative, and that there is sufficient

textural contrast created as the composition progresses.

Criterion 3: Harmonic handling

This criterion tended to be applied leniently. Post moderation, the majority of candidates achieved a mark in band 3 for this criterion. However, many centres awarded a band 4 mark for harmony which, while fluent, was not sufficiently stylistic, expressive or sophisticated to achieve a top band mark.

Criterion 4: Commentary

This criterion tended to be applied leniently. Most commentaries provided a satisfactory overview of the composition but lacked substantive analytical detail. The majority of commentaries were deserving of a mark in band 2. However, many centres awarded marks in band 3. Centres should be mindful that commentaries exceeding the 1,200-word limit cannot achieve a mark in band 3 for this criterion.

Assessment Unit A2 22   Composing: Composition with Technology Task

Submissions

There were fewer full mark and top band submissions this year. Both stimuli were popular, with a relatively even distribution of candidates choosing either (a) or (b). Some candidates were able to explore the stimulus and develop the thematic material to a very advanced level, as well as displaying evidence of the development of unique compositional styles. In most instances, a good balance between unity and variety was achieved although some work was quite repetitive.

All centres submitted the work correctly, audio tracks were clear and for the most part teacher comments were helpful and accurate. Teachers should always try and explain why they have deducted marks. It was found that teachers, in general, marked slightly too leniently across all criteria.

Criterion 1: Creation and Development of Ideas Based on a Stimulus

Candidates' work was created in, and influenced by, a wide variety of styles, genres, eras and composers which included Classical, Romantic, Neoclassical, Irish Traditional, Dance, Spiritual Song, Impressionism (Debussy/Renoir influences), Film Music/Musical Theatre/Programme Music/Rock/Jazz and Samba. Irish Traditional was the most popular choice.

In most instances, an attempt was made to utilise a well-established form in order to structure and organise ideas although this was not always clear. The most popular form/structure to use, and the most successful, was ternary form. Candidates also used binary form and theme and variations.

For Criterion 1, candidates lost marks by not developing the stimulus material appropriately or due to an over-reliance on the stimulus. Some of the weaker pieces of work lacked any other strong melodic ideas outside the use of the stimulus. Candidates should have clear melodic ideas that are contrasting, yet consistent in style and are coherent. A clear sense of structure from the beginning is also essential.

Criterion 2: Use of Harmony

For Criterion 2, the majority of marks fell into Mark Band 3. The harmonic language used was generally good but many candidates were unable to access the top mark band due to a lack of extended chords, chromatic harmony, modulation to an unrelated key and

coherent developmental use of harmonic devices. The candidates should aim for this top band, and ensure that the rest of their harmonic writing is secure. For top band candidates, this was the case and the harmonic pulse was well controlled with modulations to remote keys successfully achieved. However, some candidates remained in Mark Band 3, as their harmonic handling was secure but lacked colour or exploration, even remaining in the tonic for the entirety of the composition. Teacher marking was generally quite accurate for this criterion, with good observations and helpful comments provided.

Criterion 3: Use of Technology, including Texture and Timbre

For several centres, Music Technology was employed to a high degree and the overall production value of the work was quite high. However, it is worth noting that for Criterion 3, texture and timbre is also included in the mark scheme. Centres often only assessed the use of technology, forgetting that the use of texture and timbre also comes under this criterion. For technology, candidates must take time throughout and at the end of the compositional process to mix their composition well. It was found that panning was often too extreme with issues of balance present, as well as a lack of dynamic and tempo variety. In some cases there was an excellent use of texture and timbre, but some were sparse and the six parts required at A2 level were barely present. In these cases candidates shied away from use of the full ensemble and therefore missed out on opportunities for melodic and harmonic development. In general, the choices of ensemble were typical of the chosen style and some of the part writing was idiomatic. When editing the individual instrumental lines on the software, candidates should listen to them one-by-one and ensure that individual parts sound natural and realistic, with appropriate articulation and consideration for phrasing.

Criterion 4: Commentary

Commentaries were mostly mid to top band, although some candidates included bar numbers where no score was provided and information was not always in the correct box. Subject specific terminology was used effectively across almost all centres. Teacher's assessments were generally quite accurate and the teacher comments proved very useful where the deduction of marks was explained in detail. In general, the candidates gave insightful information into the processes undertaken. Common pitfalls were: not giving a musical example for the influences, (e.g. what musical feature has the candidate included from this composer/group/style) and not giving enough specific detail for the use of the instruments in Section 4. It should be noted that there is a penalty for commentaries outside the 1200 word limit. Teachers should also remind candidates to refer to timings rather than bar numbers unless a score has been submitted.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit A2 31   Responding to Music: Test of Aural Perception

Q1   Bartok, Concerto for Orchestra, first movement, Bars 22 – 50p

A pleasing number of candidates were able to identify the texture in (a)(i) as unison or octaves although there were numerous references to 'homophonic'. In (ii) candidates frequently lost marks by omitting to detail the type of interval as perfect/major or minor and 'tritone' appeared as a common incorrect answer. A surprising number of answers incorrectly cited 'sul ponticello' as a timbral effect. Most identified two developmental techniques correctly for (c), but in (d) many candidates were unable to identify the overall sonata form structure correctly. In identifying two harmonic features in (e), most scripts cited dissonance correctly with a wide range of incorrect generalised terms, such as ' atonal' being detailed as the second feature.

Q2   Byrd, Mass for Five Voices, Kyrie, Bars 1-26

This straightforward question was well answered across all scripts, although some candidates incorrectly referred to the key at the beginning as D minor. Other common errors were in (d) where many candidates answered 'F major' instead of 'F minor' and in (f), where there were frequent answers of 'Requiem Mass' rather than 'Mass'.

Q3   Weelkes, The Andalusian Merchant, Bars 18⁴-55

This question proved the most challenging of the set work questions in the first half of the paper. In (b) weaker candidates did appear to struggle to answer this question, often highlighting melodic and rhythmic features rather than harmonic features. In contrast a number of candidates were able to identify at least four harmonic features correctly. A common mistake was to identify 'diminished seventh' rather than 'diminished'. Again in (c) some candidates provided full answers with musical features clearly described accurately in relation to a specific word or phrase. Too many candidates lost marks by writing generalised answers, which referred to word painting, or failed to contextualise any correct features included in their response. In answers such as this, candidates must detail fully where the identified features are in relation to the specific text to attain the maximum number of marks available. Too many candidates identified the cadence incorrectly as 'imperfect' in (d), while candidates gaining credit for (e) more often simply stated that the texture was 'homophonic', with many incorrect comments including 'imitation' and 'antiphony'.

Q4   Dvořák, Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, From the New World, Mt.1, Bars 145-232

This question was the most poorly answered across the paper. While most candidates were able to identify the metre correctly in (a), and identify 'syncopation' and 'dotted rhythm' in (b), answers to (c) were often confused or incomplete. Candidates easily confused the identification of instruments, citing 'trumpet' or 'muted brass' as the first instrument and 'flute' as the second, instead of 'horn' and 'piccolo' respectively. A few answers acknowledged a recognition that the piccolo was at a higher pitch, but cited this as one octave higher instead of two. Candidates also struggled to clearly state the order in which the specific instruments appeared. In (d) very few candidates were able to identify another harmonic feature apart from the pedal. In Part (e) a significant number of candidates suggested an historical period as opposed to a date of composition, and many of the justifications in (ii) were far too general to gain credit. "Use of brass", "changing dynamics", "chromaticism" and "rubato" were not detailed or insightful enough to be creditworthy.

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Q5.   Bach, Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B minor, Menuet Bars 1-24 and Badinerie Bars 1-16

Unfortunately many pupils listed the names of all possible ornaments in (a) instead of just two, as demanded by the question. Similarly in (b) a significant number of candidates circled more than three features, resulting in a penalty of one mark per extra feature. This approach to answering questions is to be discouraged and fails to access the full marks available. Valuable marks were often lost in (c) due to answers not including 'descending or 'ascending' in relation to the sequence and arpeggio respectively. More perceptive candidates realised that the two extracts were from a suite, although 'fugue' was circled incorrectly in a significant number of scripts. Part (e)(ii) was generally well answered, though answers often omitted 'continuo' in relation to the harpsichord and therefore did not gain credit.

Q6.   Ravel, Introduction and Allegro for Harp, Flute, Clarinet and String Quartet, Allegro. Fig. 19+6 – Fig. 24

The identification of the metre and tonality were generally well handled, although some answers did suggest 6/8 as the metre. General difficulty in identifying orchestral instruments appeared again. In (b)(i) some candidates mistook the clarinet for an oboe, and in (b)(ii) many answers lost marks by answering "harp arpeggios", without the added detail of 'rising' or 'falling'. The identification of rhythmic features in (c) was well answered, as was the impressionistic style of the extract in (d)(i). However, reasons to justify the impressionist style were almost always too general or did not focus on timbre, with comments referring to harmonic, rhythmic and melodic features instead.

Assessment Unit A2 32   Responding to Music: Written Examination

Overview

Almost all candidates attempted each question with a range of success, indicating that the majority considered each question in the paper accessible. As with previous papers, a range of abilities was apparent, with candidates who demonstrated strength in both analytical and recall skills faring well.

Candidates should be reminded that when naming keys these should be written out in full and not in abbreviated forms. Similarly, all abbreviations of musical terms should be avoided and written out fully, for example, 'pizzicato'. In the extended written responses too many candidates rely on relaying all of the CCEA guidance analysis notes rather than being able to choose information that relates to the question being asked. Candidates should be reminded that they must reference the text when making a point in the extended writing responses.

The standard of answering Questions 1 and 2 was varied, with Question 1, despite being based on a familiar set work, appearing to be the more challenging of the two analysis questions on this paper.

Q1 Bernstein: Three Dance Episodes from On the Town, Mt. 3, Times Square: 1944, Bars 1-31

In (a), many candidates identified 'repetition' but failed to associate this specifically with the opening pitches. Very few answers referred to the 'blue notes' present in the clarinet melody. Candidates need to remember at A2 level they need to supply appropriate detail, for example, stating "ornamentation" is too generalised and they need to specify the type of ornament. Candidates still lose valuable marks in chord recognition questions through confusion between seventh chords and major seventh chords. Some candidates were able to identify the keys correctly in (c) but this proved to be an area for differentiation. Candidates are advised to practise this, and look for evidence of key at the beginning and ending of phrases, and cadence points.

Candidates also seemed unfamiliar with the use of the 'ostinato' as a key feature of the bass line in (d). Recognition of developmental techniques was answered well in (e) but some candidates lost marks due to identifying the use of sequence, but without detailing whether this was 'ascending' or 'descending'. Also, candidates do not seem to understand the difference between a transposition and a modulation, with the former not gaining credit. 'Augmentation' also appeared as a misunderstood term. The value of one note being altered or lengthened is not sufficient to qualify as augmentation. Expressive techniques such as 'slurs' and 'staccato' also infiltrated responses to this question. In (f), candidates were able to name at least one rhythmic feature, but the second proved more difficult to locate/articulate. Detailing 'shifting accents' seemed challenging, for some with many comments on the different placement of accents within the bar with varying degrees of success. The presentation of the "New York, New York" theme seemed well known in answering (g), but the identification of features of the instrumental scoring proved elusive, with many candidates misinterpreting 'instrumental scoring' for listing any musical features. Considering this is a studied set work, often timbral features were too vague to gain credit at A2 level, or simply a basic list of instruments, such as 'piano' or 'brass', without the relevant detail showing the influence of jazz.

Common pitfalls included:

- Not supplying the correct amount of detail e.g. "pizzicato" rather than "pizzicato double bass", and "drum with brushes" rather than "side drum with brushes".

- Incorrect identification of the muting techniques in the brass e.g. muted horns.

- Lack of specific terminology for the piano style "vamping".

- Stating "Jazz band" rather than "Big band".

- Abbreviating parts of the drum kit rather than identifying the individual uses.

- Listing scoring features which were not related to jazz, e.g. string mutes.

Q2   Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F (Pastoral), Op. 68, Fifth movement, Bars 64-100

Most candidates scored higher in this second unfamiliar score analysis. In (a) the most popular answers were 'triad/arpeggio', 'trill' and 'descending sequence'. Very few candidates were able to identify the scotch snap rhythm or anacrusis. Identification of the two differences in (b) was very well answered as were the four keys in (c). Part (d) was poorly answered, with often only 'sequence' again being partly identified. Weaker scripts often lost most of their marks in (e) as again candidates did not seem to fully understand how to name a chord. Question 2(f) was also poorly answered, with candidates naming different suite movements in a triple metre such as 'waltz' and 'minuet', rather than suggesting a type of overall work. Weaker candidates often recognised the orchestral nature of the extract but then suggested "concerto".

Q3   (a) Mozart: Requiem, Introit

This question produced a range of responses varying from very poor to excellent. Almost all candidates were able to demonstrate that the passage "Requiem aeternam" contained fugal entries, although not everyone was able to expand on this point and include the order of the entries, or observe that they were two beats apart. In less coherent responses, details of the opening instrumental entries sometimes clouded the comments, and candidates then forgot to highlight the significance of the fugal texture in the succeeding vocal entries.

The text of the soprano solo was not always mentioned and comments were often too generalised to credit. Some pupils demonstrated that they were aware of the contrasting textures throughout the piece but failed to include a specific reference to the music/text. Less successful responses focused on background information concerning the religious context of the piece. In stronger responses the homophonic nature of "et lux perpetua" was noted, the "exaudi orationem meam" was identified as being imitative, and the closing phrase of "et lux perpetua" was correctly discussed in textural terms.

Q3   (b) Chilcott: A Little Jazz Mass, Agnus Dei

Chilcott's popular styles in the Agnus Dei was a popular choice for candidates, which perhaps points to its appeal and accessibility as a set work. Many candidates showed the ability to identify at least three or four standalone features and Blues features, with exact reference to chord types used. However, other candidates saw this response as an opportunity to give a score description of all the features in the Agnus Dei, or to simply list jazz and blues features with few direct attributions to the Agnus Dei or Miserere text. Most answers highlighted the more general features such as the relaxed tempo, quasi-improvisatory melody, influence of Blues, riff, syncopation, and the instrumentation, although it was surprising how many candidates referred to bass guitar rather than double bass. References to 'unresolved dissonance', or 'quartal harmony' often appeared in responses but more often were not expanded on

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with specific examples. Some candidates mentioned 'added note chords' but did not state the specific chordal extension (9ths and 11ths). Again, as in Question 1, there was some confusion over transposition and modulation, with some candidates using incorrect terminology for the movement up a tone for the final chorus. A number of candidates sought to relate the Agnus Dei movement to pop music, focusing exclusively on structures often with incorrect or irrelevant references to verse, chorus and bridge interludes.

Q4   (a) Schumann: Ich grolle nicht

The marks for this question were quite varied. In weaker responses, candidates could not clearly identify the musical features depicting the text and a mishandling of the German was also prevalent. Too many candidates misinterpreted this question as an opportunity to point out the melodic features of the vocal melody and the features of the piano accompaniment, rather than demonstrating how this conveyed the meaning of the text. Only the top candidates were able to draw parallels between the meaning of the text and the harmonic implications phrase by phrase. Some candidates were able to acknowledge the role modulations played in conveying the singers' feelings. However, only a small number of responses exemplified this and clearly stated the tonic key of C major and then quoted modulations to A minor, G major and/ or B minor. Candidates often indicated that the climax of the piece occurred on "Herzen", although not all of these indicated the highest point as being an "A". Only a few candidates indicated the scalic descent following this climax or connected the cadences which occur in the piano coda with the singer's resignation at the end.

Q4   (b) Handel: Acis and Galatea, O ruddier then the cherry

This was the more popular choice and marks were varied. Again, as in the other short written responses, candidates lost marks due to stating a point but not including a text reference or mixing up the text. The more successful responses contained detailed references to the main melodic motifs. Some candidates mentioned the main motifs but did not give enough detail when describing them (omitting information such as sequential, semiquaver and quaver) or did not connect them to the text. Again, too often content was irrelevant or dedicated to analysing the intervallic leaps and other melodic movement in the A section of the aria and this left little space for correct description of developmental techniques. Some candidates struggled to point out that the triadic quaver melody occurred on "O ruddier than the cherry". In the same way, many candidates failed to remember the central text "Ripe as the melting cluster", misquoting this with text which rhymed, such as "lustre". More sophisticated responses showed a form of writing which had a clear structure, explaining how each motif was developed chronologically through the A and B sections of the aria. Stronger responses also pin-pointed an exact location of each theme by word or phrase, and gave a succinct description, using specialist terms; for example, referencing that rising fourths occurred on "O nymph more bright" rather merely pointing out rising fourths as a standalone feature. A handful of responses noted the presence of inversion, with some of these correctly referencing the rising fourths, "O nymph more bright", inverted at "Yet hard to tame". Other candidates acknowledged the circle of fifths but only a few responses stated its location. Few responses explored development of melodic material through modulation with accuracy and many did not state the tonic key of G minor.

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