

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/12 Listening</p>
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Key messages

Candidates' responses to all types of question are improving.

General comments

Sometimes answers need to be more detailed or precise to gain credit. Questions which ask for differences or changes require answers which describe how features such as the tempo, dynamics, key or orchestration have changed, not just that they have changed.

There is still some confusion between texture and structure.

Many candidates did not seem to be familiar with *Shaabi* music.

Comments on specific questions

Music A1

Question 1

Many candidates selected an incorrect answer for this question, with the first (incorrect) option chosen, rather than the fourth ('starts with a descending interval and moves in leaps').

Question 2

Nearly all candidates gained the mark for this question, writing 2 or 4.

Question 3

The majority of candidates selected the correct option of AABA.

Question 4

Marks were most frequently awarded for candidates noticing the change of key, the voices singing together more and/or the thicker orchestration. The off-beat brass stabs and the variations in the main melody were rarely mentioned. Candidates who referred to the voices singing in harmony were not usually precise enough (at the end/the last three lines) to be awarded the mark.

Question 5

- (a) All candidates knew that this was a musical.
- (b) Relatively few candidates gave convincing answers as to why this was a song from a musical. Answers most frequently seen included syncopation, the mixture of speech and song and the presence of tap dancing. Answers which made reference to instruments heard were not usually precise enough to gain a mark (both the orchestral and jazz band instruments had to be mentioned). A small number of candidates referred to the saxophones or drum kit, pizzicato bass or 32-bar song structure.

Music A2

Question 6

Answers of *allegro* or *vivace* gained a mark, achieved by about half the candidates. *Andante* and *moderato* were frequently seen incorrect answers.

Question 7

Nearly all the candidates recognised that the violin was playing the printed melody.

Question 8

- (a) About half the candidates selected the correct option of bars 5 and 9 (for when the additional instruments entered).
- (b) Many candidates gained one of the two marks available, for referring to the fact that the additional instruments play the same music/in imitation. Few candidates gained both marks available for this question, for saying that the additional instruments entered at a lower pitch or that it was fugal.

Question 9

- (a) Nearly all candidates correctly identified that the music was written in the Baroque period.
- (b) The presence of the harpsichord/continuo was frequently mentioned, together with terraced dynamics. The other accepted answers (polyphonic texture, suspensions or sequences) were more rarely seen.

Music B1

Question 10

Many candidates were able to gain some marks, for describing the changes in the dynamics (repeated louder, then softly, then loudly), the change in tempo (slower at the end) and the presence of many more instruments. The decoration, omission of the dotted rhythm and heterophonic texture were more rarely seen.

Question 11

- (a) The majority of candidates knew that this was a gamelan ensemble.
- (b) A similar number of candidates knew that this music was from Indonesia.

Music B2

Question 12

Some candidates gained marks for up to three of: the wind playing the melody and chords while the strings play plucked rising notes/arpeggios. Few candidates convincingly described the flute part.

Question 13

- (a) About half the candidates correctly identified that the music was from Japan. China was a common incorrect answer.
- (b) Marks were most frequently awarded for the slow/free metre and the heterophonic texture. Answers referring to the high pitch, through-composed music and the lack of chordal harmonies were rarely seen.

Music B3

Question 14

- (a) Less than half the candidates knew that this section of a *Shaabi* song is known as the mawwal. Layali was a commonly seen incorrect answer. This question was sometimes omitted by candidates.
- (b) Reference was most frequently made to the rough/high-pitched/nasal/crying intonation/plaintive/sad nature of the vocals, the free rhythm and the fact that the instruments answer the singer (call and response was accepted). Less frequently candidates mentioned the flute and bowed instruments shadowing the singer.

Question 15

Credit was most often awarded for the fact that the music was faster, metered. Some candidates made reference to the darbuka. Answers noting the repetitive melody or the presence of the trumpet/Western instruments were more rarely seen.

Question 16

Just under half the candidates knew that *Shaabi* means folk/the people. Many answers incorrectly suggested Egyptian pop music.

Question 17

- (a) Less than half the candidates knew that *Shaabi* developed in the 1970s.
- (b) The same number gained a mark for this question as did for **part (a)**. Incorrect answers often suggested television, radio or concert halls, but performance of *Shaabi* was censored in these media, as they were government-supported.

Music C1

Question 18

Candidates achieved the full range of marks available for this question. If only two notes were correct, then these were often the final two.

Question 19

The majority of candidates selected the correct answer of chromatic.

Question 20

- (a) About half the candidates correctly identified the key as D minor.
- (b) Similarly, about half the candidates gave the correct response of relative minor.
- (c) About half the candidates gave the correct answer of imperfect. Most candidates answered with a type of cadence, even if incorrect.

Question 21

Few candidates gained both marks available for this question. Accepted answers were that it was legato/not staccato, the note lengths were longer, the LH was generally higher, briefly taking the melody and that it had a 2-part texture/there were no LH chords. Despite the question saying 'apart from the key...', many candidates wrote about the change of key, for which no credit was awarded.

Question 22

Many candidates gained at least one of the two marks, for sixth, with a few correctly identifying the interval as a minor sixth. Fifth and seventh were common incorrect answers.

Question 23

A reasonable number of candidates gained at least one of the two marks, for saying that the form was rondo/ABACA or ternary/ABA. However, if given, bar numbers were often incorrect.

Question 24

- (a) The majority of candidates correctly identified this extract as being written in the Classical period.
- (b) Marks were most often awarded for the diatonic harmony, balanced phrases and homophonic texture. The presence of the Alberti bass and melodies based on scales and arpeggios were less frequently seen.

Music D1

Question 25

- (a) About a third of candidates correctly identified the section as the Recapitulation. Some candidates gave the answer of an orchestral section (e.g. strings) rather than a section of the movement.
- (b) About half the candidates knew that the horn call/falling thirds had been added.

Question 26

Marks were most often awarded for the march theme in the bass/lower strings and/or the added countermelody/violin tremolo. The use of chords other than tonic and dominant and modulation were more rarely seen.

Question 27

Many candidates were able to correctly notate the two notes in the treble clef, gaining both marks.

Question 28

Very few candidates correctly answered that it was in imitation and in F major.

Music D2

Question 29

About half the candidates correctly identified the theme as the closing theme, with many giving alternative themes such as the 1st or 2nd subject.

Question 30

The correct answers of E minor and imperfect cadence were sometimes seen, but many other keys and types of cadence were suggested.

Question 31

The majority of candidates knew that the section of the movement was the Development.

Question 32

Relatively few candidates gave an acceptable answer of passagework/semiquavers/arpeggios/diminished sevenths. A reasonable number of candidates gave the incorrect answer of scales.

Question 33

The majority of candidates selected the correct response of circle of fifths.

Question 34

Successful candidates most often mentioned the smaller range and/or the fact that the piano was softer or less sustained. Other accepted answers (lighter touch, the presence of an extra pedal, blending with the orchestral sound, a wooden rather than a cast iron frame, leather hammers) were rarely seen.

Music D3

Question 35

This was generally well-answered, with many candidates gaining both marks. Most of the successful candidates described the cello solo/monophonic texture followed by the other cellos/homophonic texture, rather than writing that it was for five solo cellos.

Question 36

- (a) The majority of candidates knew that the key was E minor.
- (b) Fewer candidates (about half) knew that the key changed to E major.

Question 37

- (a) Most candidates correctly identified the instrument heard for the first time in bars 22–23 as the timpani.
- (b) Slightly more candidates gained credit for thunder/the (impending) storm than did for **part (a)**.

Question 38

Only a very small number of candidates gained the mark for this question. Most candidates did not seem to know that the harmony/chords are different or that there is more use of minor and secondary triads.

Question 39

The majority of candidates knew that the music of the section from which the extract was taken represents the Swiss landscape or dawn.

Music D4

Question 40

Few candidates achieved all four marks available for this question. Cor anglais and the flute countermelody/scales/broken chords were most frequently correct. Candidates seemed to find it harder to identify or describe the sustained chords/notes in the horns and bassoons and the pizzicato quaver chords in the strings.

Question 41

Some candidates were able to correctly transpose the clarinet part, but there were many different wrong transpositions.

Question 42

Few candidates mentioned that the harmony alternates between tonic and dominant chords.

Question 43

The majority of candidates gained the mark for this question, by correctly saying that next in the overture is the final section/finale/galop/section four/(trumpet) fanfare.

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<p>Paper 0410/13 Listening</p>
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Key messages

Candidates' responses to all types of question are improving.

General comments

Sometimes answers need to be more detailed or precise to gain credit. Questions which ask for differences or changes require answers which describe how features such as the tempo, dynamics, key or orchestration have changed, not just that they have changed.

There is still some confusion between texture and structure.

Many candidates did not seem to be familiar with *Shaabi* music.

Comments on specific questions

Music A1

Question 1

- (a) Nearly all candidates correctly identified the voice heard as a soprano
- (b) Relatively few candidates selected the correct answer of recitative, with many opting for aria instead.

Question 2

About half the candidates correctly named the texture as homophonic/melody and accompaniment.

Question 3

The majority of candidates were able to gain the mark for giving a reason why the music in **section 3** reflected praising the king. Most answers referred to the loud dynamic, fast tempo, full ensemble or the large chorus, with fewer mentioning the major key, rising shape or the fact that it was fanfare-like.

Question 4

Nearly all candidates knew that this extract was taken from an opera.

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates gave the correct answer for this question (that the music was written in the Baroque period).
- (b) Many candidates were able to gain both marks available for this question, by noting the presence of the continuo/harpsichord and ornamentation and that it was played by a small/string orchestra. Incorrect answers often referred to terraced dynamics but these were not heard in this extract.

Music A2

Question 6

- (a) Nearly all candidates were able to gain both marks available for this question, correctly identifying the instruments as piano and violin.
- (b) About half the candidates were able to state that the relationship between the piano and violin involved imitation.

Question 7

Correct answers most often mentioned that the piano is imitated by the violin, rather than the other way round, and that the music is in a different key. Few answers noted that the piano melody is in the left hand and that the right hand plays a faster-moving part.

Question 8

The correct answer of sonata was often chosen, but many candidates selected one of the incorrect answers.

Question 9

- (a) Less than half the candidates correctly identified the music as being from the Romantic period. Classical was a common incorrect answer.
- (b) Only a few candidates gave a convincing reason as to why the music was from the Romantic period, by referring to the chromatic harmony, modulation to a wide range of keys or the lyrical melody.

Music B1

Question 10

- (a) Most candidates correctly identified the first instrument as a balafon or xylophone.
- (b) Far fewer candidates knew that the second instrument was a kora.
- (c) Nearly all candidates were able to hear and articulate that the second instrument was plucked, even if they did not know what the instrument was called.

Question 11

About half the candidates selected the correct answer of 'it begins with an ascending interval then moves by step'.

Question 12

- (a) Most candidates knew that the music was from Africa.
- (b) Far fewer candidates were able to give a reason why the music was from Africa, such as the use of repetition/ostinato and the fact that the instruments enter one by one.

Music B2

Question 13

- (a) The majority of candidates knew that the instrument heard was the dizi. Answers such as Chinese flute were not accepted, since dizi is named in the syllabus.
- (b) Nearly all candidates could state that the instrument was blown for one mark, even if they did not know what it was called.
- (c) Many candidates correctly identified the scale used in the printed extract as pentatonic.

Question 14

Many candidates were able to gain both marks available for this question, usually for noting the presence of ornamentation and then by naming a specific kind of ornament heard (e.g. trill, acciaccatura). Marks were also awarded for mentioning the use of vibrato and the fact that it is played legato.

Question 15

The majority of candidates correctly said that the music came from China.

Music B3

Question 16

- (a) A large number of candidates correctly named the nay as the melody instrument in the first passage. No credit was given for flute.
- (b) Few candidates gained all three marks available for this question. Answers most frequently seen mentioned the free rhythm and the nay playing at the end of the vocal phrases (call and response was accepted here). Less frequently candidates noted the accompaniment of a held chord and the crying/nasal/raspy vocal tone quality.
- (c) Few candidates knew that this section of the song was called the mawwal. This question was often omitted.

Question 17

- (a) A mark was most often awarded for candidates noting the faster tempo. Less often they went on to refer to the fact that it was metered, with a rhythm on one of the named instruments and that there were more instruments playing, to gain a second mark.
- (b) Few candidates knew that the repetitive nature of the vocal melody was typical of this part of a *Shaabi* song.

Question 18

- (a) Many candidates answered this incorrectly, by giving answers such as radio. The Notes for Guidance say that as a subversive genre, *Shaabi* was not heard on the radio, unlike government-promoted music. Accepted answers were cassette/mobile phones/the internet/kiosks.
- (b) Very few candidates said that *Shaabi* songs are often heard at weddings now.

Music C1

Question 19

- (a) About half the candidates gave enough detail to be awarded the mark for this question. Snare drum, side drum and snare were given credit; drum was not.
- (b) About half the candidates correctly identified the texture as monophonic. Homophonic was a common incorrect answer.

Question 20

A reasonable number of candidates gained one of the two marks available for correctly identifying the interval as a seventh. Few candidates gained the second mark for minor.

Question 21

Candidates were often able to gain two of the three marks available for this question. Answers frequently gave the rhythm of bar 27 for all three bars. Occasionally candidates gave answers in which the total number of beats in each bar was not correct.

Question 22

- (a) A reasonable number of candidates heard that a descending scale was heard in bars 37–38.
- (b) Just over half the candidates heard that the descending scale was played by a flute and/or piccolo.

Question 23

- (a) For this question, the cadence was more often correct than the key.
- (b) A relatively small number of candidates gave the correct answer of relative minor and a reasonable number of candidates omitted this question.

Question 24

- (a) Just over half the candidates knew that the extract was part of a waltz.
- (b) Few candidates were able to give three reasons as to why the music was a waltz and to gain all three marks available. Answers most frequently seen referred to the triple time (though the fact that it was 3/8 rather than 3/4 seemed to confuse some), the fast tempo and the um-cha-cha accompaniment. The clear melody, succession of different melodies, mixture of legato and staccato articulation and use of one chord per bar were rarely seen.

Music D1

Question 25

- (a) Candidates seemed to find this question rather difficult, with few gaining any of the three marks available. Marks were awarded for noting that the theme is in the dominant/G major, the preceding theme is in the dominant minor/G minor, this theme returns in the tonic in the recapitulation and it is a lyrical melody.
- (b) About half the candidates knew or could hear that the piano melody was accompaniment by a LH piano Alberti bass and off-beat chords played by the strings.

Question 26

A reasonable number of candidates could describe the music in enough detail to gain two marks for this question. Marks were awarded for noting up to two of the following: it is virtuosic, with semiquaver arpeggios/broken chords, (fleeting) dissonance/chromaticism, octaves and use of sequence.

Question 27

Many candidates gained both marks for this question, by correctly writing the two notes in the treble clef.

Music D2

Question 28

A surprisingly small number of candidates were awarded credit for this question, given that it required knowledge which is not specific to the set work. Candidates most frequently noted the quadruple time signature and brisk (but not too fast) tempo, with very few mentioning the use of only tonic and dominant chords, the triadic melodies, dotted rhythms or the wind/brass used as a section.

Question 29

Many candidates selected the correct two options of ascending sequence and dominant pedal. A very small number of candidates ticked only one box for this question.

Question 30

- (a) A relatively small number of candidates knew that the second subject began at bar 28 of the extract. Some answers did not refer to a part of the exposition, though this was given in the question.
- (b) About a third of candidates knew that the second subject was still in the tonic because the extract was from the opening ritornello/orchestral exposition.

Question 31

About half the candidates knew that the 1st subject/opening theme would be played next. March theme was accepted as an answer.

Music D3

Question 32

Less than half the candidates were able to gain the two marks for this question, by correctly writing the two notes from the viola part in the treble clef.

Question 33

Very few candidates gained all four marks available here. Responses most frequently noted the fact that the instruments are marked *smorzando*/dying away (*diminuendo* or gets quieter were also credited) and that the raindrop pattern was heard. Very few mentioned the chromatic scales which are fragmented and used in longer note values.

Question 34

The majority of candidates knew that the *Ranz des Vaches* or Call to the Cows would be played next, after the recorded extract.

Question 35

About half the candidates selected the correct answer of Paris Opéra.

Music D4

Question 36

Very few candidates were able to comment convincingly enough on the harmony and cadences to be given credit. Cadences were occasionally mentioned, but the use of only tonic and dominant chords was rarely seen.

Question 37

Accepted answers for this question required the word full (power or force) or as loud as possible. Answers which just said loud, or mentioned power or force were not given credit.

Question 38

- (a) A relatively small number of candidates identified the key correctly as C sharp minor.
- (b) A larger number of candidates gained the mark here (for relative minor) than did for **part (a)** of this question.

Question 39

Few candidates stated that Theme C/the theme from bar 17 would be played next in the overture.

Question 40

Many candidates were able to gain at least one of the two marks for this question, by giving one or more of: to give the audience time to settle, to introduce themes which will be heard in the opera and to set the general mood/scene.

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/02 Performing</p>

Key messages

Centres' administration of this component has improved greatly.

Marking is generally more accurate.

Problems with inappropriate choices of repertoire for ensemble performances persist.

General comments

There was a wide range of performances, some of which far exceeded the expectations at this level.

Centres usually submitted coursework which was well organised, clearly presented and without errors of addition or transfer of marks.

Comments on specific Areas

Solos

Most candidates performed solos which were clearly within their current capabilities, allowing them to perform with not just the correct notes and rhythms, but at a suitable and sustained tempo, with sensitivity to phrasing and expression and with good technical control. Candidates who attempted pieces beyond their current technical capabilities usually were not able to access as many marks in categories **(b)**, **(c)**, **(d)** and **(e)**, meaning that they received a lower mark than they might have done with an easier piece of music. The syllabus states that candidates should perform either one piece or two short contrasting pieces. Candidates who performed two longer pieces were inevitably able to perform one piece more successfully than the other and their weaker piece brought down the overall mark for individual performing.

Occasionally, Moderators encountered candidates performing for a very short amount of time (and not meeting the minimum of four minutes playing time over both the solo and ensemble performances). A very short piece does not allow a candidate to sufficiently demonstrate the range of technical and musical skills required for high marks in category **(a)**.

If an accompanying part exists and a suitable accompanist is available (notwithstanding the current situation, which may make this more difficult), then it is much more musically satisfying for the candidate to perform with accompaniment. Although some candidates did a sterling job in maintaining a steady tempo without accompaniment, passages with long rests do not make musical sense if the accompaniment is not heard.

Ensembles

Despite the current situation, many candidates were able to perform in ensembles very successfully, including piano duets or pieces for two pianos, in small chamber groups, as part of a band or providing piano accompaniment. Again, the most successful performances were those where the piece chosen was comfortably within the range of the candidate's level of technical and musical skills, allowing them also to exhibit good ensemble coordination.

Whilst it is good for candidates to perform as part of an ensemble with other candidates during the course, it is not necessary for the other musicians in the submitted ensemble to be candidates for the examination.

Again, candidates who were most successful in this part of the component were performing music suitable for them and their instrument.

Unfortunately, Moderators encountered a few examples of ensemble performances which were not suitable. These included pieces which were accompanied solos, and duets where the performers alternated rather than performing together (sometimes with piano accompaniment). Songs from musicals which involve two singers often have this problem; for a performer to demonstrate good ensemble coordination there must be a sufficient amount of music where the performers sing together.

For this session, it was recognised that in some cases candidates would not be able to meet the requirement of singing or playing in an ensemble. For these candidates, mark adjustment was available to centres who applied in advance of submission. Unfortunately, Moderators found that some centres had chosen instead to allow candidates to perform a piece with a backing track. Backing tracks and/or multi-tracking must not be used in any part of the ensemble performance.

Marking

In general, marking of this component has improved, with far fewer examples of very generous or severe marking. If a candidate performs a piece of at least Grade 4 standard (of the standard graded examining boards) successfully, then they should be awarded a mark of 5 for category **(a)**. Conversely, if a candidate performs one or two very simple pieces, then this will impact the marks they might be able to achieve in categories **(b)**, **(c)**, **(d)** and **(e)**. Checking the Overall Descriptors is particularly helpful in this situation.

Administration

Most centres presented their coursework very clearly, with no issues. Unfortunately, a few problems were encountered by Moderators. The material for Performing and for Composing must be submitted in separate packages, since they are moderated by different people. Sheet music for each piece performed should be included, with annotations if the performer has intentionally altered their performance from what is written. Each score should be clearly labelled with the candidate's name and candidate number and (in the case of an ensemble performance) the part that they are playing.

The addition of marks should be undertaken with care, to avoid errors, and the mark accurately transferred from the Performing Working Mark sheet to the Coursework Assessment Summary Form and then on to the Marks Report. A copy of the Marks Report should be printed once the marks are showing as submitted and this copy should be included with the submission.

Centres are requested to check the recordings before submission, to ensure that they are complete and can be played on standard equipment. For a CD, a track listing should be provided, so that the work of a particular candidate can be quickly and accurately identified. The tracks on the CD and the paperwork should be in candidate number order.

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/03 Composing</p>
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Key message

- Most candidates took every advantage of technology to produce scores, and the use of ICT was of a good standard in the main.
- Long and rambling structures caused some compositions to lose marks; often, pieces started with initial ideas that showed potential, but did not develop effectively due to a lack of clear structure, planned focus and direction.
- Writing for voices was not always successfully achieved, and vocal ranges and word-setting not always comfortably placed. Correct attention to such details will bring dividends in terms of assessment.
- Screenshots provided with sufficient annotation and explanation seemed to be in the minority; additional and detailed musical explanation is required when no score has been submitted, and precise details on the application of technology is required.
- Live recordings should accurately reflect the score.
- CDs should be checked to ensure that the complete recording is present on the CD and that every page of the score has been printed out.

General Comments

Overall, there was a range of ability in evidence, with many compositions falling in the mid to upper range. Most candidates explored a contrasting style and instrumentation for each composition; generally, candidates demonstrated a sound appreciation of the style they wished to achieve, though further research and wider listening would have helped in some cases. Most work contained features that could reach the upper bands of the assessment criteria, even if not consistently.

Candidates fared best in centres where composing materials were carefully matched to individual candidates, and where a broad range of styles and textures were explored. Candidates given clear objectives and realistic parameters were often at an advantage. Where material was too simple or short, strong candidates were unable to demonstrate their knowledge fully. Weaker candidates struggled when material was too long. Here, candidates were not furnished with the building blocks with which to achieve coherence and clarity.

Assessment

Overall, the marking this year seemed a little more realistic than in previous years, and although there were many examples of assessment being on the generous side, the rank order was usually agreed with. Some centres had monitored the work diligently and the application of the assessment criteria was very accurately applied. There were a few cases where the marking overall was very generous, yet one or two were severely judged.

Acknowledgement of excellent work is straightforward enough. Occasionally, marks for lower range pieces tended to be a little harsh and do not always give credit for the positive musical features seen in a composition (even if the overall stylistic effect was unconvincing or lacking in substance). The difficulty arises when mid and lower range pieces have been awarded higher marks than they deserve; in these cases, the outcomes lack the refinement and sophisticated musical understanding commensurate with higher bands of assessment.

A few candidates write compositions that have accompaniments or other parts performed by others. Centres must assess precisely what the candidate has written and not the outcome or recording which may well have been enhanced by a performer who is not the candidate. If a candidate composes a melody and adds chord symbols it is not possible to give credit for an elaborate realisation of these elements by an accomplished

performer. Primary evidence of how the part was written and communicated to the other performer(s) must be provided to the Moderator so that the reliability of the assessment of the candidate's work can be verified, and the validity and integrity of the examination maintained. It is worthwhile remembering that the score is the substantive examination document; the recording is for illustration purposes only and no marks are given for it. Therefore, if it is not in the score, marks cannot be attributed.

Many centres adopted excellent practice in the presentation of the assessment material, including all the necessary documentation in their submission. Unfortunately, there were a few examples of inaudible tracks, unclear labelling on CDs and missing or inaccurate track lists – all of which delayed the moderation process.

The comments given by teachers in support of their assessments are valued by Moderators and are most useful when they reference the marking criteria.

Compositions

Stronger candidates wrote clearly and convincingly in a Western Classical Tradition, gaining top range mark bands; these were compositions with excellent use of harmony, structure, texture, musical devices and other compositional techniques. Most centres have clearly spent time developing a good understanding of the style of the Western Classical Tradition, including the study of harmonic and textural procedures; this has had a positive impact on candidates being able to access the higher assessment bands.

Good examples were stylistic, demonstrating melodic fluency and conviction, effectively structured with well varied harmonic foundations. There were some impressive pieces with clear processes which displayed mature, creative and musical imagination, demonstrating a controlled use of elements, varying the use of texture, and incorporating interesting yet appropriate rhythms, syncopations and performance directions. Candidates demonstrated their musical understanding by writing melodies with antecedent and consequent phrasing, their harmonic awareness through use of cadences, 7ths, inversions, pedals and modulation.

Weaker submissions were limited and unconvincing in many elements, resulting in clear shortcomings when dealing with the initial creation of ideas. It was clear that some candidates did not have the required knowledge and understanding to convincingly write in the Western Classical Tradition. Control of the elements of music needed more careful direction in such compositions: structural focus (many compositions lacked shape); more thoughtful thematic substance (some melodies were limited, angular, and very triadic); convincing harmonic progress (more variety of chords, thoughtful chord progressions, some variety of inversions needed and correct cadential progressions); variation of texture (not all homophonic movement); instrumentation (use of techniques); and the use of devices in general (to aid development). Some pieces were too long, self-penalising in the musical quality, as they began to meander without clear purposes or musical climax. Often the endings of pieces were weak. The development of thematic material proved to be problematic for some candidates; some candidates introduced too much new material that did not develop.

There were also examples of brass compositions, piano solos, orchestral music, jazz ensembles, rock, funk, and pop. Many of the more modern pieces sounded effective, but some were unable to access the higher bands of assessment as they lacked sufficient development in both thematic material and texture and were too repetitive and simplistic harmonically; several orchestral scores also lacked clarity in terms of organisation and development of musical ideas, presenting meandering melodic content that lacked focus and direction.

Score Presentation/Notation

Most candidates took every advantage of technology to produce scores, and the use of ICT was of a high standard in the main.

However, candidates should be discouraged from scattering dynamics on their scores without sufficient thought for whether they are appropriate. Dynamics added at random will not result in higher marks, but carefully planned markings will, provided they make sense. Further, care must be taken in the assessment of this descriptor, for computer generated scores can look superficially particularly good when they are not. Marks for such scores seem often to rely on this superficial impression, rather than on a careful check of their accuracy.

There were examples of screenshots with insufficient annotation and explanation. Additional and detailed musical explanation is required when no traditional score has been submitted, and precise details on the application of technology is required.

Recorded Performance

Some centres had produced live recordings of a composition using very talented performers. It is excellent practice as the candidates can establish suitability of part writing for voices and/or instruments. On occasion, such performance standards did give a false impression of the pieces being better than they were, as the actual content sometimes lacked development of ideas. It is important to bear the assessment criteria in mind.

There were also some good live school orchestra, string ensemble, jazz and rock band performances and it was clear from the candidates' handling of the ensembles that they had a particularly good knowledge and direct experience of the ensembles for which they were composing. Conversely, there were also examples of live recordings which did not enhance the pieces; in such circumstances it may be advisable to submit the digital realisation in support of the coursework.

Recordings should be assembled in candidate number order, with Composition 1 followed by Composition 2 for each candidate. A track list should also be provided on a separate piece of paper.

CDs

The CDs submitted were mostly of good quality and some included live work. Very occasionally, the recordings were not well-balanced or were quiet. Moderators noted occasional technical faults with some CDs, but there was usually a detailed score to fall back on.

The process is easier when details of all recordings are submitted with a track list, and not written on the CD, which cannot then be read once it is inside the CD player. As often happens, some tracks were in the wrong order and incorrectly introduced as Composition 1 when they were in fact Composition 2. Some CDs included incomplete recordings; for example, when the opening or conclusion of a piece was missing.

In centres with several candidates, it is better to include all their work on a single CD, rather than submitting a separate CD for each candidate. Each Composition must be on a separate, individual track. This enables the Moderators, when checking the marking, to easily access a selection of Compositions.

Administration

In most cases the administration process of the component was completed satisfactory. Centres have achieved this by:

- A fully completed and signed *Composing Working Mark Sheet, MS1, Coursework Assessment Summary Form*.
- Musical scores that are clearly completed with candidate name and number.
- Annotations that are thoughtfully presented to guide the Moderator through the score and recording.
- Recordings on CDs that are well produced and clearly labelled.
- Packaging that is sufficient to protect CDs but is otherwise minimal.

However, there were some problematic issues, and though these will have been detailed in the individual centre reports, the following were perceived to be the most common:

- Scores printed with inefficient use of paper and therefore running to dozens (or even scores) of pages.
- Annotations that are little more than a blurred screenshot of a graphic-styled score.
- CDs that are blank or have very poor-quality recording.
- Over-enthusiastic packaging of scores.