

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0978/12 Listening 12</p>

Key messages

In answers to questions such as ‘what is different’ or ‘what has changed’ many candidates need to be much more specific. Answers such as ‘the key’ or ‘the instruments used’ are not detailed enough to be awarded any marks. A similar principle applies as to why an extract is from a particular place or period.

Many candidates chose not to answer some questions at all.

General comments

Candidates achieved across the whole range of marks – from very few to nearly full marks.

Many candidates left some questions unanswered. This was particularly common for Extract B3, the set world focus. Candidates who did answer questions in this section often appeared to be referring to Indian music in general, rather than the focus topic.

The majority of centres had chosen the Haydn set work, rather than the Brahms.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Music A1

Question 1

More than half the candidates gave an accepted Italian tempo marking such as vivace or allegro. Moderato and andante were not accepted

Question 2

Half the candidates chose the correct option of ascends and descends in steps of a semitone.

Question 3

Most candidates gained at least one of the three marks available for this question. Commonly seen responses included mention of trumpets, drums, percussion or brass and the loud dynamic. Fewer candidates referred to the fanfares, dissonance or angular intervals.

Question 4

Again, many candidates were able to gain at least one of the two marks, most often for describing the dialogue between the brass and strings. A reasonable number of candidates also gained the second mark, often for reference to the ascending sequence.

Question 5

About half the candidates chose the correct answer of Twentieth Century.

Music A2

Question 6

Just under half the candidates correctly identified the compositional device as an (ascending) sequence. Only the word sequence was required to gain the mark.

Question 7

One mark was most frequently awarded for recognition of the repeated notes/quavers. Few candidates gained both available marks, for going on to note that the accompaniment was played in unison by the upper strings.

Question 8

Just over half the candidates correctly identified the piece as a concerto. Sonata was a commonly seen incorrect answer.

Question 9

- (a) This was well answered, with a large number of candidates selecting the correct answer of Baroque.
- (b) This part of the question was also well answered, with frequent reference to the harpsichord, terraced dynamics, small orchestra and ornamentation. Some candidates wrote that the music was polyphonic. Whilst this is often a feature of Baroque music, it was not the case for this extract.
- (c) A good number of candidates correctly selected Vivaldi as the composer.

Section B

Music B1

Question 10

Just under half the candidates correctly named the instrument as a balafon or xylophone. No credit was awarded for marimba, which was also frequently seen.

Question 11

This was reasonably well answered, with many candidates gaining at least one of the two marks, usually for mentioning that the group of singers always have the same answering phrase.

Question 12

- (a) Nearly all the candidates correctly identified that the music was from Africa.
- (b) This was very well answered, with many candidates gaining both available marks. Examiners often saw reference to the use of drums or percussion as accompanying instruments and the use of polyrhythm, ostinato and call and response.

Music B2

13

- (a) About half the candidates correctly named the instrument playing the printed melody as panpipes.
- (b) Many candidates did not gain any marks for this question. It was often not noted that the voices repeated the melody only from the end of bar 9, rather than the whole printed passage. Reference to the changed rhythms was rarely seen, but the harmonisation of the melody by other voices was sometimes encountered.

Question 14

Again, candidates frequently did not refer to the fact that only the second part of the printed melody was heard. For this question a mark was most frequently awarded for mentioning the addition of more instruments.

Question 15

A large number of candidates correctly suggested that the music was from South America (Latin America was also accepted).

Music B3

Question 16

- (a) A very small number of candidates correctly identified the algoza or satārā.
- (b) Examiners sometimes saw reference to the two joined flutes playing the melody and drone. Reference to circular breathing was rarely seen. It was rare for a candidate to gain all three marks available for this question.

Question 17

- (a) As for **Question 16(a)**, a very small number of candidates correctly identified the instrument as the dholak.
- (b) Candidates occasionally gained a mark for reference to the basic rhythmic pattern/metrical cycle, but it was very rare for a candidate to be awarded both marks for this question.

Question 18

- (a) A large number of candidates did not offer an answer for this question. Those that did sometimes gained a mark for correctly naming an occasion when the music would be heard. It was rare for the second mark to be awarded for noting that the musicians were traditionally employed under patronage.
- (b) Again, this question was often omitted and of the answers seen, only about a fifth gained a mark for correctly suggesting where the music can now be heard.

Section C

Music C1

Question 19

About half the candidates correctly described the articulation as staccato. Examiners sometimes saw answers with words which were not related to articulation.

Question 20

Candidates did not often gain marks for this question. When they did it was most often for noting that the final note was extended.

Question 21

Even fewer candidates gained marks for this question than did for the previous one. Very occasionally Examiners were able to award credit for some reference to the cello's repeated quavers/alternating notes/rocking pattern/as a bass line or the arpeggio (in the clarinet and piano parts).

Question 22

This was usually well answered, but sometimes only one mark was awarded as candidates wrote major instead of minor third.

Question 23

As is usually the case, a significant number of candidates did not attempt to answer this question. Those candidates who were awarded the full three marks had frequently omitted the E natural in the second bar. Many of the candidates who received credit gained one mark for a correct melodic shape.

Question 24

- (a) For this question the cadence was more frequently correctly identified than the key.
- (b) Just under half the candidates identified the relationship correctly as the dominant.

Question 25

Very few candidates were awarded credit for their answers to this question. Correct responses for the Classical period usually referenced the regular phrase lengths whilst those for the Romantic period were usually mentioning the rubato in the performance.

Question 26

Possibly helped by the information given in **Question 25**, the majority of candidates correctly identified the composer as Beethoven.

Section D

Music D1

Question 27

This question did not result in many candidates gaining credit. A mark was sometimes awarded for noting that the music is now quiet, but it was rare for candidates to gain all three marks available.

Question 28

- (a) Very few candidates gained credit for this question. Examiners occasionally saw reference to the imitation and ascending sequence, but rarely any of the other accepted points.
- (b) About half the candidates answering questions on the Haydn set work chose the correct rhythmic effect of hemiola.

Question 29

Some candidates knew that the title was Minuet or Menuetto. Fewer gained two marks for this question by knowing that the tempo marking was moderato.

Music D2

Question 30

An extremely small number of candidates knew that the music was similar to that heard in the codetta.

Question 31

Relatively few candidates gained credit for this question. When they did, it was usually for noting that the music is now played by the wind, the imitation and/or the fact that it is an octave higher. The sustained horns and timpani were not usually referenced.

Question 32

Many candidates were able to correctly notate the two notes from the viola part in the treble clef.

Question 33

Answers to this question very frequently did not refer to anything to do with harmony. An extremely small number of candidates gained a mark here.

Question 34

- (a) Nearly half the candidates gave the correct name of 'Military'. Some candidates suggested 'Symphony no. 100', which was not awarded credit.
- (b) A few candidates were awarded the mark for noting the Turkish instruments or correctly naming two of them.

Music D3

Question 35

Relatively few marks were awarded for answers to this question, despite there being three available. Reference to the louder dynamic was most frequently seen, followed by the change in time signature. Answers which just said 'minor to major' or similar were not awarded credit as this is not sufficient detail for a set work.

Question 36

- (a) Some candidates gained one or two of the marks for this question, usually for either or both of on the beat and syncopated.
- (b) The majority of candidates identified that a similar effect is heard in bar 12.

Question 37

Candidates rarely gained both available marks for knowing that the following music would be the first theme but played legato/softly/strings only/more lyrical.

Music D4

Question 38

About half the candidates knew that the start of the recorded extract was part of the recapitulation.

Question 39

This was reasonably well answered, but occasionally answers were written an octave too high and were not awarded credit.

Question 40

- (a) About half the candidates knew that the name of the song was *Gaudeamus igitur*.
- (b) The majority of candidates knew that the coda begins at this point.
- (c) Few candidates gained credit for this question. If they did, it was usually for the scales.

Question 41

Less than a third of candidates correctly identified the cadence as plagal, with perfect being a frequently seen incorrect answer.

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<p>Paper 0978/02 Performing</p>

Key messages

The organisation of submissions continues to improve, with most centres including all the required material and with the correct addition and transfer of marks.

Marking is also much more realistic, with fewer centres requiring marks to be moderated significantly.

General comments

Problems with inappropriate choices of repertoire for ensemble performances persist.

Some centres do not send hard copies of the sheet music, which are always required.

Solo Performances

The choice of solo repertoire was generally good, with most candidates performing pieces which were suited to the current level of skill. A few candidates presented only a very short piece, which did not allow them to demonstrate a full range of skills at the relevant level. It is fine for candidates to perform two shorter pieces for their solo performance, with a single mark reflecting the two pieces together.

There were also examples where a piece should have been accompanied but it was not. This sometimes led to a lower mark in the category 'choice and control of tempo'. Accompaniments may be performed live or may be a backing track for a solo performance.

Ensemble Performances

Unfortunately, problems with unsuitable choices of repertoire for ensemble performances persist. It is not the number of performers that is significant here, rather the role which they play. If a candidate is accompanied by the other instruments, then this is not a suitable piece for an ensemble performance. Similarly, if a candidate alternates with one of the other performers, whilst being accompanied (as is often the case in vocal pieces from musicals), then this is not suitable for an ensemble performance.

Centres are reminded that the candidate's part should not be consistently doubled in an ensemble performance and that backing tracks should not be used at all. The candidate's part should be clearly identified on the performing working mark sheet and on the printed music.

As for solo performing, there were occasional examples of very short pieces, which did not give the candidate scope to demonstrate skills at the relevant level.

Marking

The level of marking has generally become much more accurate, with Moderators having to make fewer changes. However, there were still examples of candidates performing very easy repertoire, yet still receiving high marks, which then had to be significantly reduced.

Administration

Along with marking, this is much improved, with centres including in the submission all the required material, correctly completed. However, there were still several instances of incorrect addition or transfer of marks.

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In a centre with more than one candidate, the recordings should be put onto one CD (not a separate CD for each candidate). A list of tracks should also be provided. When sending material to Cambridge, the material for performing and for composing must be submitted in separate packages as these are moderated by different people.

Recordings should be checked before being submitted. This should hopefully ensure that no tracks are cut short, with part of the performance missing.

Many centres choose not to complete the comments section on the performing working mark sheets. However, Moderators find these very useful to read.

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0978/03 Composing</p>
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Key message

- Centres are reminded that the examination requires candidates to submit compositions in the form of notated scores and an audio recording. It is not one or the other.
- Whilst some compositions were inspired and totally engaging, many opportunities to reach the high mark bands were missed. This was mainly due to the fact that strong initial material was not sufficiently shaped or extended to deliver a result that displayed a candidate's individual style.
- There were examples of work over-reliant on repetition and also 'cut and paste' where the content had been 'transposed' to a higher or lower key (with the help of the computer), but not showing strong understanding of this harmonic device.
- Scores must be submitted in hard copy irrespective of the software used to produce them.

General comments

In most cases, compositions from within a centre drew upon a wide range of genres and musical combinations with pleasing success, with good use made to create interesting textures, and achieve variety and contrast in the use of the musical elements. It is commendable when centres allow candidates to explore their own interests and develop their own strengths.

Most of the tasks set were appropriate for the candidates. However, there are centres which continue to issue class tasks - and also centres whose candidates had approached compositions in the same 'step-by-step' manner, with very similar methods. Care has to be taken that these methods do not lead to outcomes which lack individuality and expression and leave little room for personal expression and creativity.

Further, there were examples where the candidates had all created theme and variations on existing themes and harmonies; in such compositions the original contribution is limited. Incorporation of external musical ideas such as these (persistent examples are the Pachelbel or Michael Nyman ground bass or the use of very simple nursery rhymes as thematic material) will not be awarded any credit; only the ideas of the candidate are assessed and given credit. Theme and variations were more successful when the candidates composed their own theme.

Once again it was good to observe that most candidates had made a real effort with the notation of their compositions and in many cases the score reflected the audio recording of the piece. 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.

Administration by centres again was in most cases completed well and this continues to improve each year. However, there are still a small number of examples where teachers' signatures, candidate details and missing scores are absent from the centre's submission. Also, there were a few examples where the CD supplied was wrongly formatted and the '*Internal Assessment Mark Sheet*' (MS1) had marks that did not correspond with either the *Coursework Assessment Summary Form* or the *Composing Working Mark Sheet*.

Assessment

Overall, the marking this year was realistic and though 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 extremely generous, yet one or two were severely judged.

Compositions that fell within the top bands demonstrated a high level of understanding in developing and manipulating the raw materials of music. Ideas were often based on inventive and extended chordal patterns, fluently presented within coherent structures, and the development of opening melodies was refined and creative.

Occasionally, marks for lower range pieces tended to be a little severe and did not always give credit for the positive musical features seen in a composition.

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.

Compositions

Candidates continue to demonstrate endless creativity through their submissions: an impressive level of inventiveness has been demonstrated through this year's work. As before, many compositions drew inspiration from the areas candidates had studied during their course, while others took the opportunity to inhabit a genre that appealed to them outside of this. It is important to emphasise that, whilst inspiration may come from anywhere, the nature of composition and its scope should be chosen carefully to best enable the candidate's talents to be fully demonstrated and matched to that required in the specification for this examination.

What this means in practice is to follow a genre in which the candidate feels comfortable, but with which a certain level of complexity and creativity can be written into the piece. To have one eye on the published mark scheme can be useful here, but the bottom line is that the music submitted should not be in a style that is overly restrictive (and therefore precluding access to the upper bands for ideas, structure, use of medium, compositional technique and score presentation/notation) nor overly ambitious (meaning that a successful style is too hard to develop or that technical control will suffer).

Examples of submissions which were overly restrictive included:

- Songs based on a simple verse-chorus structure, based on the same short chord progression
- Pieces with restricted textures that remained unchanged throughout
- Pieces that remained in the same key throughout, that were entirely diatonic or had a harmonic rhythm that never changed
- Compositions that were highly sectional, or which used a 'sketchbook' approach.

Aspects of submissions which at times, set an impossible challenge included:

- Writing effectively for a large ensemble (though naturally some can, and did)
- Writing effective virtuosic writing, particularly for piano (moderators heard a number of pieces that would have sounded impressive when played back in software but were impossible to play in real life)
- Writing in an advanced harmonic idiom or in complex time signatures

To conclude, the most effective pieces demonstrated excellent textural control and variety, with thoughtful development of ideas, strong progressions of harmony and distinctive, well-shaped and characterful melodic content. Less successful pieces were short, repetitive and lacking in any real attempt to develop the initial melodic, rhythmic or harmonic material.

Score presentation/Notation

There were some very good scores, clear and articulate with attention to detail. In a small number of cases there were scores with ambiguities, clumsy arrangements and lacking in performance instructions. Centres are reminded that scores should always be submitted in hard copy, irrespective of the programme used to

create them. This applies for all scores, including those produced using Sibelius or other software programmes. A data disc containing the score is not acceptable, it must be submitted in hard copy. Please also note that separate parts are not a substitute for the full score.

In editing a score, candidates are encouraged to view the task as composing a piece of music rather than just completing a technical exercise. Therefore, the use of correct rests, articulation and dynamics for example are easily overlooked. Further, staves must be clearly labelled with the correct instrumentation. A piece entitled 'string quartet' and scored for piano and violin is an example of this technical approach going wrong.

Once again, centres are reminded that songs should always have the voice part notated at the very least. If the accompaniment cannot be notated in full, then chord symbols could be added, so that there is at least a guide to the intended nature of the accompaniment. It must be stressed, however, that a song presented with just the words and a few chord symbols does not constitute an adequate form of notation.

Recorded performance

The quality of recordings was generally very good, and most centres had taken care to ensure that tracks were labelled clearly, either by using announcements or a clearly numbered track list, or both. Some recordings were live, which is also encouraging, as this confirmed the viability of vocal and instrumental part-writing on the part of the candidates.

Once again, recordings extracted from music software were mostly well balanced and of excellent quality. Others were less thoughtfully produced, with little regard for balance, some had tracks muted, with no explanation, and a tiny minority were simply far too quiet.

Administration

It is pleasing to report that the vast majority of centres had taken great care to ensure that every aspect of the administration was completed to an extremely high standard. Unfortunately, there were also a number of submissions that caused problems and delayed the moderation process. It is advised that teachers can greatly aid the moderation process by ensuring the following procedures are followed:

- **Include Working Mark Sheets.** A number of Centres did not send the Working Mark Sheet for each candidate. Without this the Moderators have no way of knowing what marks have been awarded for the individual assessment criteria, which is a significant part of the moderation process.
- **Correct transcription from the Working Mark Sheets.** Marks were sometimes wrongly transcribed onto the Summary Mark Sheet, or onto the MS1 form (or electronic equivalent).
- **Submitted coursework must be readily accessible.** Some documentation and recordings submitted on files could not be accessed by the moderator as they required specific software to open.
- **Broken CDs.** There were several cases where the CDs had not been adequately protected. Although excessively bulky packaging should be avoided, if at all possible, it is important that CDs should be wrapped carefully so that they survive the journey in the post.
- **Lack of information on CD or USB.** Examples here included no track list, or an incorrect track list that included wrong candidate names or candidate numbers.