

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/11 Listening</p>
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Key messages

Some questions were not answered with enough detail: if candidates are asked to describe changes or why something is from a particular time or place, an answer like ‘the instruments, the tempo etc.’ is not sufficient.

Questions requiring just a few words (for one or two marks) were generally answered well, while answers with more marks needed to contain more relevant detail.

Answers on texture were better than in previous series, but questions on structure still require more focus.

For questions requiring candidates to explain why a particular extract comes from a particular place or time, candidates need to refer to features they have heard in the extract, not to features which they have learned are typical of a particular part of the world or period.

Comments on specific questions

Music A1

- 1 (a) Many candidates were able to correctly identify the violins.
(b) Marks for this question were most often gained for identifying that the music was quiet and/or slow. Some candidates also mentioned that it was smooth or that it was in two parts. Candidates were not given credit for simply saying the music was calm (taking a word from the lyrics) without identifying the musical features which made the music calm.
- 2 While many candidates correctly identified the entrance of a new instrument (most often the cello), fewer gained both marks. Candidates who achieved both marks on this question most often heard that the vocal line was doubled by an instrument.
- 3 Approximately half the candidates correctly chose semitone, with the rest choosing from all the other three options.
- 4 (a) About a third of candidates correctly suggested that the music was from the twentieth century. Baroque (perhaps because of the string accompaniment) and Romantic were common incorrect answers.
(b) Chromaticism and dissonance were the most common correct answers, with just a small number of candidates noticing the angular melody. Errors in 4(a) sometimes led to suggestions about the size of the group accompanying or the fact that it was a string quartet.

Music A2

- 5 More than half the candidates gained a mark for diminuendo or decrescendo. However, many other words relating to dynamics and other musical features (particularly tempo) were suggested.
- 6 This question was very well-answered (strings), with only a few candidates writing woodwind or brass.
- 7 While most candidates correctly chose minor, major and pentatonic were also often chosen.

- 8 Nearly half the candidates correctly identified the (descending) sequence, although imitation or repetition was a common incorrect answer.
- 9 Marks were most often awarded for saying that the melody was higher, with some candidates gaining a second mark for the fact that the melody is now played by the violins or that there was a countermelody/two melody lines/the texture becomes polyphonic.
- 10 While many candidates correctly chose Beethoven, Shostakovich and Debussy were also often chosen (but not Bach).

Music B1

- 11 The majority of candidates were able to gain a mark for xylophone, balafon or marimba, with a small number suggesting other instruments such as mbira, metallophone or djembe.
- 12 This question was very well answered, with candidates gaining marks for call and response, the group of voices the presence of a soloist and the repeated melodies. Candidates did not identify that the group of voices sing in unison.
- 13 (a) This was the best-answered question on the paper, with nearly all candidates saying that the music was from Africa. The few that were incorrect usually suggested Latin America.
- (b) This was reasonably well answered, with candidates gaining marks by identifying the use of percussion instruments (a strong focus on rhythm was accepted as an alternative), the instruments entering one by one, polyrhythm or cross rhythm and the use of ostinato/repetition. A small number of candidates were given credit for suggesting that the music was pentatonic.

Music B2

- 14 (a) While many candidates correctly identified the sarangi, many suggested instruments such as the er-hu or rebab. Since the sarangi is listed in the syllabus, candidates were not given credit for answers such as 'Indian bowed string instrument'.
- (b) More candidates were able to gain a mark for bowed string instrument here.
- 15 (a) India was usually correct, but a few candidates suggested China or Indonesia.
- (b) The reasons most often given credit were the presence of the drone and the tabla and the use of pitch bending or ornaments. A smaller number of candidates gained marks for noting the small group of instruments and the improvisation of the melody.

Music B3

- 16 (a) Less than half of candidates correctly identified the ryuteki, with many suggesting shakuhachi instead (even though the shakuhachi is not used in gagaku music).
- (b) This was better answered than part (a), with more than half of the candidates noticing the pitch bending or sliding. Some candidates mentioned features which were not playing effects, such as blowing.
- 17 (a) Candidates often gained one mark here, for identifying the sho, with fewer gaining the second mark for hichiriki. Those who had not correctly identified the ryuteki for 16(a) often suggested it here instead.
- (b) Many candidates were able to gain a mark for the melody, but very few gained the second mark for the chords (with candidates often suggesting that the sho played a drone/long note).
- 18 The majority of candidates suggested the correct answers of koto or biwa, though some gave shamisen instead.
- 19 One mark was most often gained for the heterophonic texture, with a small number of candidates gaining a second mark for the string accompaniment. A few candidates noticed that the melody was played in octaves.

20 Most candidates wrote gagaku, but court music and folk music were also given.

Music C1

21 This question was very well answered, with many candidates gaining both marks available for major third.

22 Candidates are improving their answers to the melody dictation question, with many gaining all three marks for an entirely correct answer or with just one error.

23 About 50% of candidates were able to gain a mark for choosing the option of descending scale, but all other options were also selected.

24 (a) Candidates most often gained a mark for perfect, with far fewer correctly identifying the key of D minor.

(b) Nearly half the candidates gained a mark for relative minor, with dominant being a popular incorrect answer.

25 (a) Despite being asked to describe the structure of the extract, many candidates wrote just about the first eight bars of the music and therefore gained no marks for this question. Some candidates gained a mark for rondo/ABACA and a smaller number went on to outline the structure with reference to correct bar numbers. A small number of candidates suggested that the music was in ternary form.

(b) Less than a quarter of candidates said horn, with cello or harpsichord popular incorrect answers.

26 (a) This was often answered with the correct answer of Baroque, with a small number suggesting Classical instead.

(b) This question in particular led to candidates writing features of Baroque music they had learned (polyphonic texture or ornamentation), but which were not heard in the extract. Marks were most often awarded for the presence of the harpsichord/continuo, the small orchestra, the dominance of the strings and the terraced dynamics.

Music D1

27 (a) Nearly all candidates who studied this set work were able to correctly say that the music represents the singing of the birds.

(b) Many candidates referred to the fact that the music is high, the use of trills/mordents/ornaments, repeated notes, imitation or a polyphonic texture, with many gaining all three marks available for this question. Only a few candidates mentioned the use of three solo violins.

(c) Just over half of the candidates answering this question knew that the bars are based on an E major chord (credit was also given for tonic or chord I).

28 Credit was given for any mention of an episode and/or ritornello in any order, with many candidates achieving at least one mark.

29 Approximately half the candidates selected the correct answer of 'The Contest of Harmony and Invention' with the remaining candidates choosing any other answer.

Music D2

30 The use of the word "scoring" in the question was not always understood, with some candidates writing about tempo or the sections of the music. Fewer than 25% of the candidates answering the question were able to gain a mark.

31 Many candidates gave the correct answer of C sharp minor, with the most common incorrect answer being E major.

- 32 Candidates achieved a variety of marks for this question, from 0 to 4. Candidates not achieving full marks could often link the barking dog with the violas, but not the leaves and plants with the violins.
- 33 This was well-answered, though there were many answers which were an octave too high.

Music D3

- 34 (a) Most candidates answering questions on this set work gained a mark for D major.
- (b) Some candidates were too vague and wrote simply 'exposition' and others suggested different parts of the movement, rather than the correct answer of second subject.
- (c) Candidates who had studied the set work in detail were able to explain that the second subject might be expected to be in the dominant key/A major, but many were not able to do this.
- 35 A wide variety of answers here. Candidates who achieved just one of the two available marks for this question usually omitted the F natural. As with the corresponding question for the Vivaldi set work, some candidates wrote an answer which was an octave too high.
- 36 Despite a range of ways in which to achieve the two available marks, many candidates did not gain any marks for this question. Marks were most often gained for the development section in a minor key, with the use of the introductory theme in inversion seen very occasionally.
- 37 This question was often omitted, but 50% of candidates answering correctly identified the tradition as flamenco.

Music D4

- 38 (a) Many candidates were able to correctly identify the key as A major.
- (b) Most of the candidates answering part (a) correctly were able to go on to gain a mark for this part question for dominant.
- 39 A very small number of candidates precisely identified the developed rondo theme.
- 40 E major was a very common incorrect answer, with a small number of candidates giving the correct answer of B major.
- 41 (a) Fewer than half of the candidates answering this question correctly chose the dominant pedal response, with many selecting tonic pedal or contrary motion instead.
- (b) Very few candidates were able to explain clearly that the dominant pedal prepares for the return of the tonic key.
- 42 (a) Although many candidates could identify the structure as rondo, others wrote that the movement was in sonata form or gave answers not related to structure.
- (b) About a third of candidates answering this question were able to say that this was an episode, for one mark, with some identifying it precisely as the fourth episode.

MUSIC

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

Knowledge of the set works did not appear to be as strong as in some previous years.

Candidates should only write about the features of the music heard in the extract when answering questions on style or period; they should not simply list features they have been taught when these are not heard in the examination.

Comments on specific questions

Music A1

- 1 (a) This question was very well answered, with most candidates correctly identifying 3 beats per bar.
(b) Again, most candidates correctly identified that the music was a waltz.
- 2 The tenor voice was well identified, although some female voice types were also suggested.
- 3 This question was well answered; most candidates gained some credit and many made two or three valid observations. The most common correct answers referred to the fast tempo, the major key, that the music was for dancing, and that the chorus represented the guests at the party.
- 4 (a) Many candidates identified that the music was written in the nineteenth century or Romantic period, although the Classical period and occasionally Baroque period were also often suggested.
(b) Correct answers here usually referred to the large orchestra or lyrical melody.

Music A2

- 5 This question was fairly well answered; many candidates correctly identified saxophones, although trombone/trumpet was a common incorrect answer.
- 6 There were a variety of options chosen here; the correct response was AABA.
- 7 (a) Most candidates correctly identified the trumpet.
(b) Many candidates correctly identified glissando or trill.
- 8 (a) Almost all candidates correctly identified that this was an example of Jazz.
(b) This question was well answered. Most candidates gained some credit and many made two or three valid observations. The most common correct points were the use of swung quavers and syncopation, the improvised solos, use of the blues scale, the walking bass, and the use of drum kit.

Music B1

- 9 Many candidates were able to identify the use of ostinato or repetition to gain one mark, but fewer gave more precise details of the pattern of two notes a minor third apart, and only a few referred to this pattern being played by all instruments in unison. Credit was given to candidates who described what the drums were playing, but comments such as 'there are drums' are insufficient in a 'describe' question.
- 10 A number of candidates commented on the introduction of a melody played by the suling/flute, but fewer identified that this was played heterophonically in octaves.
- 11 (a) Most candidates correctly suggested Gamelan.
(b) Indonesia (or Bali/Java) was the correct answer given by most candidates.

Music B2

- 12 Most candidates chose the correct option, chromatic.
- 13 Many candidates correctly identified Bandoneons; accordions was also accepted, but candidates should be encouraged to use the correct name for the instrument used in tango.
- 14 This question was fairly well answered with most candidates gaining at least some credit. The most common correct comparison was between the generally staccato articulation of the first section and the more legato articulation in the second. Some candidates correctly observed that the note lengths in the second section are generally longer and that the first section is minor and the second is major.
- 15 Most candidates correctly identified that this music was from Latin America/Argentina. Those who stated accordion in Question 13 sometimes suggested that this music came from France, which is not a possibility in the syllabus for this section of the paper.

Music B3

- 16 (a) Many candidates correctly identified the sho, but others named string instruments.
(b) Those who described a wind instrument were usually correct in referring to air being blown through bamboo pipes, but only a few of these candidates identified the use of a reed to make the sound. Other candidates incorrectly described string instruments.
- 17 Ryuteki and Hichiriki were the correct answers given by some candidates, but a wide variety of instrument names were given here, not all of them Japanese.
- 18 (a) This question was well answered; most candidates knew that the music was gagaku.
(b) Again, this was well answered, with many candidates referring to the Japanese court or royal court.
(c) Many candidates gained credit here, with some good answers referring to the very slow tempo/free meter, instruments joining one by one and the heterophonic texture. There was a tendency for some candidates to list the features mentioned in 'Music Worldwide' without considering whether they were heard in this extract. For example, stating that 'Japanese music has the sections jo – ha – kyu' is not describing the features of this extract – there is no evidence that the candidate knows which section they are listening to, or if they even think all three sections are present.

Music C1

- 19 Andante and Allegretto were the most common correct answers.
- 20 There was a wide variety of achievement here. Candidates should be encouraged at the very least to observe the rhythm that is given to help – those who write more or fewer notes than the number given do not have any possibility of gaining full marks.

- 21** Many candidates correctly stated descending sequence or sequence, but there were various other suggestions, often including ornamentation.
- 22** A large number of candidates seemed to look at, rather than listen to, this bar. Many described the features that were already printed in the score and failed to make any observation at all about the trill or the improvised cadenza. Those candidates who did describe the features of the cadenza usually did so accurately.
- 23** There was a variety of answers here, some of which were not names of intervals; however, many did state perfect fourth which was the correct answer.
- 24** This question was answered fairly well with many candidates gaining at least some credit. The structure of ABA was most frequently identified correctly, although ABC was a common incorrect answer. The bar numbers were fairly well observed, although many candidates incorrectly identified the B section as finishing in bar 57. Many candidates identified the key as returning to A major, but a wide variety of keys were suggested for the B section, including the correct answer E major, but also many incorrect keys which were often minor.
- 25** This question was fairly well answered with many candidates choosing the correct option, concerto.
- 26 (a)** The period of the music was very well identified as Classical.
- (b)** The most common correct answers were regular phrase lengths, a small orchestra dominated by strings, and an emphasis on tonic and dominant or diatonic harmony.

Music D1

- 27 (a)** This question was fairly well answered, with many candidates gaining at least one mark by identifying the change in key to minor or the addition of the pedal note; not many candidates made both points, however.
- (b)** Again, this was fairly well answered. The most commonly identified correct features were the trills/ornaments, high pitch, polyphonic texture and the gradual decrease in note lengths.
- 28** Many candidates had not learned what this meant, and suggested incorrectly that it might mean violin solo, rather than no chords are to be played by the harpsichord.
- 29** Candidates who knew the piece adequately were able to refer to the cadenza-like section, and could describe the melodic shape appropriately.

Music D2

- 30 (a)** E minor was sometimes correctly identified, but C sharp minor was a common incorrect answer.
- (b)** This question was answered correctly (E major) more frequently than part (a).
- 31** There was a wide variety of answers here. Some were correct, but others were written in the wrong octave. Some candidates had tried to write the wrong bar or did not know how to write the part in the treble clef at all.
- 32** It was quite common for candidates to be able to identify the use of pedal or drone, but fewer gained the second mark by identifying it as the dominant, or stating which instrument played it.
- 33** This was fairly well answered, with many candidates identifying the ritornello theme returning in E major played by the full orchestra.

Music D3

- 34 (a)** Most candidates identified the key correctly as D major.
- (b)** Answers here were vaguer and often incorrect; second subject (of the exposition) was the correct answer.

(c) A few candidates knew that the second subject might be expected to be in the dominant or A major, but most answers were incorrect.

35 A wide variety of answers were found here. Some were completely correct, but others missed the natural sign on the F. A few were at the wrong octave, and others were transposed entirely incorrectly.

36 This was answered fairly well, with the most frequently identified correct features being the modulation to A minor for the development section.

37 Many candidates gave the correct response, Flamenco.

Music D4

38 (a) Most candidates gave the correct answer, A major.

(b) Fewer candidates identified this as the dominant key.

39 Only a small number of candidates correctly identified this as the developed rondo theme.

40 The most common answer given here was E major, which was incorrect – B major was the correct answer.

41 (a) The correct answer was dominant pedal, but few candidates chose this option.

(b) The purpose of the pedal is to prepare for the return of the tonic/final restatement of the rondo theme, but few candidates described this.

42 (a) Most candidates knew that the movement was in rondo form, but many stated sonata form; some answers had nothing to do with structure.

(b) Only a few candidates correctly identified that this was an episode.

MUSIC

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

Some questions were not answered with enough detail: if candidates are asked to describe changes or why something is from a particular time or place, an answer like ‘the instruments, the tempo etc.’ is not sufficient.

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Answers on texture were better than in previous series, but questions on structure still require more focus.

For questions requiring candidates to explain why a particular extract comes from a particular place or time, candidates need to refer to features they have heard in the extract, not to features which they have learned are typical of a particular part of the world or period.

Comments on specific questions

Music A1

- 1 (a) Many candidates were able to correctly identify the violins.
(b) Marks for this question were most often gained for identifying that the music was quiet and/or slow. Some candidates also mentioned that it was smooth or that it was in two parts. Candidates were not given credit for simply saying the music was calm (taking a word from the lyrics) without identifying the musical features which made the music calm.
- 2 While many candidates correctly identified the entrance of a new instrument (most often the cello), fewer gained both marks. Candidates who achieved both marks on this question most often heard that the vocal line was doubled by an instrument.
- 3 Approximately half the candidates correctly chose semitone, with the rest choosing from all the other three options.
- 4 (a) About a third of candidates correctly suggested that the music was from the twentieth century. Baroque (perhaps because of the string accompaniment) and Romantic were common incorrect answers.
(b) Chromaticism and dissonance were the most common correct answers, with just a small number of candidates noticing the angular melody. Errors in 4(a) sometimes led to suggestions about the size of the group accompanying or the fact that it was a string quartet.

Music A2

- 5 More than half the candidates gained a mark for diminuendo or decrescendo. However, many other words relating to dynamics and other musical features (particularly tempo) were suggested.
- 6 This question was very well-answered (strings), with only a few candidates writing woodwind or brass.
- 7 While most candidates correctly chose minor, major and pentatonic were also often chosen.

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Music B2

- 14 (a) While many candidates correctly identified the sarangi, many suggested instruments such as the er-hu or rebab. Since the sarangi is listed in the syllabus, candidates were not given credit for answers such as 'Indian bowed string instrument'.
- (b) More candidates were able to gain a mark for bowed string instrument here.
- 15 (a) India was usually correct, but a few candidates suggested China or Indonesia.
- (b) The reasons most often given credit were the presence of the drone and the tabla and the use of pitch bending or ornaments. A smaller number of candidates gained marks for noting the small group of instruments and the improvisation of the melody.

Music B3

- 16 (a) Less than half of candidates correctly identified the ryuteki, with many suggesting shakuhachi instead (even though the shakuhachi is not used in gagaku music).
- (b) This was better answered than part (a), with more than half of the candidates noticing the pitch bending or sliding. Some candidates mentioned features which were not playing effects, such as blowing.
- 17 (a) Candidates often gained one mark here, for identifying the sho, with fewer gaining the second mark for hichiriki. Those who had not correctly identified the ryuteki for 16(a) often suggested it here instead.
- (b) Many candidates were able to gain a mark for the melody, but very few gained the second mark for the chords (with candidates often suggesting that the sho played a drone/long note).
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- 19 One mark was most often gained for the heterophonic texture, with a small number of candidates gaining a second mark for the string accompaniment. A few candidates noticed that the melody was played in octaves.

20 Most candidates wrote gagaku, but court music and folk music were also given.

Music C1

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22 Candidates are improving their answers to the melody dictation question, with many gaining all three marks for an entirely correct answer or with just one error.

23 About 50% of candidates were able to gain a mark for choosing the option of descending scale, but all other options were also selected.

24 (a) Candidates most often gained a mark for perfect, with far fewer correctly identifying the key of D minor.

(b) Nearly half the candidates gained a mark for relative minor, with dominant being a popular incorrect answer.

25 (a) Despite being asked to describe the structure of the extract, many candidates wrote just about the first eight bars of the music and therefore gained no marks for this question. Some candidates gained a mark for rondo/ABACA and a smaller number went on to outline the structure with reference to correct bar numbers. A small number of candidates suggested that the music was in ternary form.

(b) Less than a quarter of candidates said horn, with cello or harpsichord popular incorrect answers.

26 (a) This was often answered with the correct answer of Baroque, with a small number suggesting Classical instead.

(b) This question in particular led to candidates writing features of Baroque music they had learned (polyphonic texture or ornamentation), but which were not heard in the extract. Marks were most often awarded for the presence of the harpsichord/continuo, the small orchestra, the dominance of the strings and the terraced dynamics.

Music D1

27 (a) Nearly all candidates who studied this set work were able to correctly say that the music represents the singing of the birds.

(b) Many candidates referred to the fact that the music is high, the use of trills/mordents/ornaments, repeated notes, imitation or a polyphonic texture, with many gaining all three marks available for this question. Only a few candidates mentioned the use of three solo violins.

(c) Just over half of the candidates answering this question knew that the bars are based on an E major chord (credit was also given for tonic or chord I).

28 Credit was given for any mention of an episode and/or ritornello in any order, with many candidates achieving at least one mark.

29 Approximately half the candidates selected the correct answer of 'The Contest of Harmony and Invention' with the remaining candidates choosing any other answer.

Music D2

30 The use of the word "scoring" in the question was not always understood, with some candidates writing about tempo or the sections of the music. Fewer than 25% of the candidates answering the question were able to gain a mark.

31 Many candidates gave the correct answer of C sharp minor, with the most common incorrect answer being E major.

- 32 Candidates achieved a variety of marks for this question, from 0 to 4. Candidates not achieving full marks could often link the barking dog with the violas, but not the leaves and plants with the violins.
- 33 This was well-answered, though there were many answers which were an octave too high.

Music D3

- 34 (a) Most candidates answering questions on this set work gained a mark for D major.
- (b) Some candidates were too vague and wrote simply 'exposition' and others suggested different parts of the movement, rather than the correct answer of second subject.
- (c) Candidates who had studied the set work in detail were able to explain that the second subject might be expected to be in the dominant key/A major, but many were not able to do this.
- 35 A wide variety of answers here. Candidates who achieved just one of the two available marks for this question usually omitted the F natural. As with the corresponding question for the Vivaldi set work, some candidates wrote an answer which was an octave too high.
- 36 Despite a range of ways in which to achieve the two available marks, many candidates did not gain any marks for this question. Marks were most often gained for the development section in a minor key, with the use of the introductory theme in inversion seen very occasionally.
- 37 This question was often omitted, but 50% of candidates answering correctly identified the tradition as flamenco.

Music D4

- 38 (a) Many candidates were able to correctly identify the key as A major.
- (b) Most of the candidates answering part (a) correctly were able to go on to gain a mark for this part question for dominant.
- 39 A very small number of candidates precisely identified the developed rondo theme.
- 40 E major was a very common incorrect answer, with a small number of candidates giving the correct answer of B major.
- 41 (a) Fewer than half of the candidates answering this question correctly chose the dominant pedal response, with many selecting tonic pedal or contrary motion instead.
- (b) Very few candidates were able to explain clearly that the dominant pedal prepares for the return of the tonic key.
- 42 (a) Although many candidates could identify the structure as rondo, others wrote that the movement was in sonata form or gave answers not related to structure.
- (b) About a third of candidates answering this question were able to say that this was an episode, for one mark, with some identifying it precisely as the fourth episode.

MUSIC

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

Key messages

- A number of ensemble performances did not meet the syllabus requirements
- More attention could be paid to 'sensitivity to phrasing and expression'

General comments

As always, the Moderators enjoyed listening to a selection of solo and ensemble performances on many different instruments or voice, in a wide variety of musical styles and cultures. The qualities of a good performance, however, remain constant across cultures: preparation, commitment and communication. Many performances showed all of these qualities, and more. It was also encouraging that most candidates had received (and heeded) positive advice on the choice of music for their performances, although there were still some examples of musical potential which could not be fully realised, because the candidate had chosen a piece they could not perform well enough.

Centres are reminded that there is a minimum performing time of four minutes. It is pleasing to report that there were fewer submissions this year which did not meet the minimum performing time; if candidates are performing short pieces, they should add a second solo and/or ensemble piece to meet the time requirements. Candidates who do not perform for at least four minutes have not demonstrated the necessary skills to achieve the highest marks.

Solos

Most solo performances were successful, with repertoire that matched the candidates' technical ability. There is still room for improvement in the area of sensitivity to phrasing and expression: performing with a range of suitable dynamics and articulation (whether printed or not), along with careful and expressive phrasing in order to bring the music to life is an essential part of any performance. Intonation was also an issue in some performances; guitarists should ensure their instrument is in tune before the recording commences, and wind players should be fully warmed-up. Where generous marking was found, it was often in the categories of technical control (which includes intonation) and sensitivity to phrasing and expression.

Ensembles

Whilst many of the ensemble performances were well-chosen and well-rehearsed, there were still many performances submitted as ensembles which clearly did not meet the syllabus requirements. The ability to perform in an ensemble develops a wide range of essential musical skills and a well-chosen ensemble piece should be enjoyable to rehearse; Centres are encouraged to devote sufficient time to advising, choosing and rehearsing appropriate ensemble pieces with their candidates.

Ensemble repertoire must allow the candidate to demonstrate genuine ensemble skills, by performing in a group in which their role is not mainly as a soloist. The chosen piece must allow them to respond musically to the other members of the group – this could be by sensitive accompanying, matching details of articulation or diction, rhythmic co-ordination, and appropriate dynamic balance.

The most common problems with ensembles were much the same as found in recent years, as follows:

Solos: A few candidates submitted pieces described as ‘ensembles’ but which consisted of only one performer. There is no possible way in which these pieces could have been described as ensembles. Some Centres perhaps think that performing a solo on a second instrument is allowable in this category, but there is nothing in the syllabus to suggest that this is the case.

Accompanied solos: in these pieces, there were often more than two performers, but the candidate’s part was clearly a solo. Examples included solo songs in which drums and/or bass had been added in addition to the piano accompaniment; this is still a solo song for the singer. Other examples included candidates playing a piano solo (often a grade exam piece) to which a bass instrument had been added, for example, perhaps simply doubling the left hand.

Vocal ‘duets’ (usually from musical theatre repertoire): a number of ‘duets’ were submitted, but the vocal parts in fact consisted of solo passages alternating between two solo singers – if the candidate hardly ever sings at the same time as the other singer, they cannot be demonstrating ensemble skills. An appropriate vocal duet should allow the candidate to demonstrate the ability to maintain an independent part singing in harmony with one or more other singers.

Pieces with backing track: these may not feature in any way in an ensemble performance – ensembles must only include live performers.

There were again some examples of ensemble pieces which were at a much lower level of technical and musical demand than the candidate’s solo piece, and this did not allow them to achieve as high a mark as might have been possible. This often happened when all candidates from one Centre took part in the same ensemble performance, without sufficiently differentiated parts. It is not necessary for all of the candidates in a class to take part in the same ensemble.

Centres are reminded that where an ensemble consists of more than one instrument or voice of the same type, it is impossible for the Moderator to know which performer is the candidate if no further information, specifically sheet music with the candidate’s part clearly indicated, is provided by the Centre. This was most commonly a problem with piano duets, vocal ensembles and percussion pieces.

Assessment

Much of the assessment was broadly accurate and realistic, and the comments box was often used appropriately – all Centres are asked to complete the comments box, please. Most of the inaccurate marking demonstrated undue leniency – sometimes seriously so. Centres are reminded that there are training materials available online to assist in understanding the standard of the coursework. As mentioned earlier, the marks for ‘sensitivity to phrasing and expression’ and ‘technical control’ were the ones which were usually the most lenient; sometimes a complete absence of dynamic contrast was assessed as ‘moderate’ and the mark for technical control did not always sufficiently address poor intonation or poor tone quality, particularly for singers. Marks for the range of technical and musical skills demonstrated were usually fairly accurate, although the key word here is demonstrated – the same piece played by two different candidates might get different marks in this category, if it is appropriate for one but too difficult for another.

Centres are again reminded to check the addition and transfer of marks carefully – there were very many errors, which have been detailed on the individual feedback form.

There still appears to be confusion in some Centres surrounding internal moderation. This process is intended for use only in large Centres where different teachers have marked the work of more than one teaching group independently, and is designed to ensure the application of a common standard. It is not to be used for one teacher to change some or all of the marks of another teacher without explanation. Where the coursework has all been assessed by one teacher, no further moderation is necessary.

Presentation of coursework

The majority of the coursework was presented in a helpful format. Please note the following advice:

- The work must be submitted on CD, not DVD or memory stick
- CDs should be sent with track listings
- The track listing should not be written on the CD itself (because it is not visible once it is in the CD player)
- CDs must be playable on a CD player, not only on a computer
- Please use as few CDs as possible – individual CDs for each candidate are not helpful
- Please package the CD robustly so that it does not get broken in transit
- It is a requirement of the syllabus that copies of the sheet music should be sent, with the sole exception of music which has been improvised
- Please do not staple the mark sheets to the sheet music
- Send the performing coursework separately from the composing

MUSIC

Paper 0410/03
Composing

Key messages

- Care should be taken to ensure that marks are correctly added and correctly transcribed onto the form submitted to Cambridge.
- CDs should be checked before submission to ensure that the whole of every piece is recorded and that the CDs can be played on a standard CD player.
- There should be announcements on the CD, giving the candidate's name and number and the title of the piece that is to follow.
- In Centres with several candidates, a track list should be provided on a sheet of paper separate from the CD itself.
- Candidates should be encouraged to compose pieces which allow them to fulfil the whole range of the assessment criteria.
- No credit should be given for compositional ideas that are not created by the candidate.

General comments

A very wide range of ability was demonstrated in the compositions submitted this year. The very best candidates continue to work at a level beyond the normal expectations of IGCSE. Where achievement was less secure, it was often because insufficient attention had been paid to the full range of skills required by the Assessment Criteria, or because the full meaning of the descriptors had not been taken into account.

The standard of administration by Centres was generally satisfactory, although certain problems still persist. The most common of these are the incorrect addition of marks, the inaccurate transcription of marks from one form to another or missing documentation. Several Centres did not comply with the requirement that CDs must be playable on a standard domestic CD player: formats that need to be played on a computer are not permitted.

Assessment

Internal marking by Centres was often realistic and broadly accurate. Over-generous marking remains a problem, especially at the upper end of the mark range. In a number of Centres high marks were awarded under all five headings, with little or no account taken of the descriptors which define the meaning of each mark. In some cases the internal marking was very erratic indeed.

Marks for Notation and Presentation were very often too high, especially in cases where the scores had been produced using computer software. Such scores need careful editing, but very few had received it.

Compositions

There was the usual wide range of different styles and candidates' pieces covered a similarly wide range of instrumental combinations. Most compositions were well-conceived, with good ideas that were well structured and fairly idiomatically written for the instrument(s) or voice(s) concerned. A few Centres had still not taken account of the requirement that the two compositions must be scored for different instruments or voices.

It is also a syllabus requirement that Composition 1 must be in a style which allows the candidate to demonstrate familiarity with the broad principles of Western harmonic procedures, and that this composition must be notated using Western staff notation. There were some cases where this had not been observed, especially when, for example, guitar tab had been used to notate both pieces.

There were again several compositions which could not be awarded achieve high marks because of the nature of the pieces themselves. In some Centres it appeared that candidates had not made their own decisions about what to compose, but had been given teacher-set tasks to complete. This approach is rarely successful, especially if the tasks lend themselves to unduly formulaic solutions. Examples of this include such tasks as 12-tone pieces, minimalism, ground basses (especially where the ground bass itself is 'given' – or borrowed from an existing piece). When candidates choose for themselves what to compose, they are usually much better motivated to produce good work and this is without question the best way for them to demonstrate the full extent of their creativity.

Pieces based on pre-existing material are always problematic. Any quotations from the music of other people must always be acknowledged, because no credit can be given to ideas that are not the candidate's own. It is therefore advisable not to submit pieces based on existing themes (e.g. variations on nursery rhymes or folk tunes, ground bass pieces based on themes by Purcell or on the chord sequence of Pachelbel's Canon, pieces based on loops downloaded from the Internet). There were instances of all of these among this year's compositions. If candidates incorporate pre-existing music into their compositions without acknowledgement, there is a risk that they may be accused of plagiarism: no one wants this to happen.

Notation and Presentation

There were very few handwritten scores; most, as usual, were produced using computer software. Although some of these were very good, accurately edited and detailed, many were not. There is often a tendency to rely on the program getting everything right by default, which it can never do. Many inaccuracies result, for example, incorrect enharmonic spelling of notes, wrong rests, colliding slurs, notes, or dynamics. The problem is that computer-generated scores look superficially good even 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.

Lyrics with a few chord symbols are not sufficient as a notation of a song for the purposes of the examination. Even if the chords are wholly accurate, such scores can only be given a very low mark. Some attempt must always be made to notate at least part of the vocal line.

Recorded Performances

There were very few recordings of live performances this year. Although at times the live performances may have been a struggle for the performers, live recordings are almost always preferable to a synthesised playback of a computer score, particularly for songs where 'Choir Ahs' can never do justice to the vocal lines. More significantly, songs which are recorded in this way almost always have other problems as well, such as poor attention to underlay and word stress.

CDs

Most CDs were formatted so that they played on a standard CD player. There were some that could be accessed only on a computer: Centres are reminded that these are not permitted and that they must check that the CDs will play on the correct equipment before they are submitted.

Some recordings were submitted with significant instrumental parts entirely missing. Examples include a recording of a string quartet where only the viola part was recorded, or a piece for flute and piano in which the flute part was absent. Such instances demonstrate that the CDs were not checked before being submitted, even though the box on the WMS was ticked to say that they had been.

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. The order in which pieces are presented should follow the order of candidate numbers as they appear on the mark sheet sent in to Cambridge, with Piece 1 followed by Piece 2 for each candidate. A track list is also essential: this should be on a separate piece of paper, not written on the CD itself. There should be a brief recorded announcement for each candidate and each piece.

Each piece must be on a separate, individual track. This enables the moderators, when checking the marking, to easily access a selection of pieces.

Administration

There were several instances of incorrect additions of marks and in inaccurate transcriptions of marks onto the form submitted to Cambridge.

All scores should show the Centre name and number and the candidate name and number. Scores should be bound together in some way.

Internal moderation must not be done when there is a single teaching group taught by the same person. If there are two different teaching groups, or if two teachers are involved in teaching the Composing component, the marks for each teacher's group must be brought into line: those are the only circumstances where internal moderation must be done.

If marks are changed after internal moderation, the Working Mark Sheets must be annotated so that the external Moderator can see which mark or marks were changed, and why.