

MUSIC

Paper 0410/11
Listening

Key messages

Candidates gave some detailed responses to the first sections of the paper. These included some very good descriptions of what they could hear in the music.

Questions which required background knowledge (e.g. which period is the music from) were less well-answered.

Answers to questions on the set world focus and the set works were very variable; some candidates knew the music of the region or the work in great detail while others gained very few marks on these extracts.

Candidates are becoming more confident in using terminology for sonata-form movements, but this was often used incorrectly.

General comments

Answers to questions on texture are improving, with candidates now much more frequently using vocabulary which relates to texture (even if it is sometimes incorrect). However, questions about structure are still often misunderstood.

Candidates should ensure that their answers relate to the music they have heard in the extract and not music from the particular period or culture in general. For example, just because a piece is from the Baroque period it does not mean that it will definitely have a polyphonic texture.

Only a quarter of candidates studied Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony* (Movements 2 and 4) as their set work, with the majority of candidates studying Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* (Movement 1). Very occasionally candidates seem uncertain as to which work they have studied or where they should write their answers in the question paper.

Comments on specific questions

A1

Question 1

There were some very good answers to this opening question, with most candidates gaining at least one mark. Answers about the volume, pitch, use of instruments or choir were most frequently seen, with fewer candidates noting the major key.

Question 2

Only about half the candidates gained the mark for 'Descends by step, then ascends by step for "te"'.

Question 3

Most candidates gained at least one of the three marks, usually for the presence of solo singers or the fact that it was quieter/had fewer instruments. Fewer candidates mentioned the polyphonic/imitative texture or the fact that it becomes minor.

Question 4

- (a) Just over half the candidates gained a mark for either 'Classical' or a date within the Classical period.
- (b) About half the candidates correctly selected Mozart, with Brahms and Stravinsky frequently seen incorrect answers.

A2

Question 5

Credit was awarded for any reasonably fast Italian tempo markings, such as Allegro, Allegretto and Vivace. There were many incorrect answers such as Andante and some slower tempos suggested.

Question 6

Many candidates were able to gain both marks available, usually for noticing that the strings were playing scales. A few candidates noticed the horns.

Question 7

Responses to this question suggested that a few candidates were unsure which repetition of the melody they were listening to. However, many candidates were able to gain all four marks available for this question (two for each repetition), most frequently for the second time for the melody being played by trombones/tubas, another octave lower, cymbal crashes and it is louder. For the third time candidates often noted that the melody was played by the woodwind (since it is played by the flute and oboe these named instruments were accepted, but not clarinet), the strings playing lightly in the rests (any reasonable description was accepted) and that it was quieter.

Question 8

About half the candidates gained a mark for either 'Romantic', or a date or dates within the Romantic period.

B1

Question 9

- (a) Though many candidates gave the correct answer of sitar, there were many incorrect answers, including instruments from other parts of the world.
- (b) More candidates gained a mark here (for plucked) than did for part (a).

Question 10

As with **Question 9(a)**, a wide variety of answers were seen, including instruments from other cultures and instruments which were wind instruments. Only a quarter of candidates correctly named the sarangi.

Question 11

- (a) The majority of candidates recognised that the extract was from an Indian piece of music.
- (b) Candidates who gained both marks available for this question frequently noted the presence of a drone and the use of pitch bending. A small number of candidates referred to the free metre / rhythm.

B2

Question 12

Less than half of the candidates chose the correct answer of A minor, with C major being the most common incorrect answer.

Question 13

Many candidates gained a mark for noting that the music becomes higher in pitch. Fewer candidates gained both marks for this question, for mentioning the repeated notes, shorter notes or the major key.

Question 14

Half the candidates correctly said ternary or ABA. Some answers often were not related to structure.

Question 15

- (a) The majority of candidates gained a mark for Latin America, with some even more precise answers.
- (b) Candidates had a wide choice of instruments they could name, with most opting for pan pipes. Again, some named instruments which were not from the culture or heard in the extract.

B3

Question 16

- (a) Many candidates correctly identified the gaohu (for one mark), but many named the erhu instead and there were also other instruments suggested. Candidates who gained the mark for describing the instrument usually stated that it had two strings was bowed, or that it was smaller or higher than the erhu. Candidates were able to receive a mark for a correct description even if they had not correctly named the instrument.
- (b) Many of the candidates gained a mark for pentatonic scale, but only a few correctly explained the passing tones for the second mark.

Question 17

Some candidates gained a mark for heterophonic texture, but fewer noticed or mentioned the initial monophonic texture.

Question 18

Many candidates were able to gain at least one of the three marks available for this question, by stating that the music got faster. Giving more detail and naming specific passages allowed them to access a second mark, while three marks were only available to those who mentioned both metre and tempo.

Question 19

Many suggestions were offered for this question, such as courts, palaces, theatres, but only tea houses (as stated in the Guidance Notes) was accepted. This was stated by a small number of candidates.

C1

Question 20

Just over half the candidates were able to identify that the key of the music was F major. No other answers were accepted.

Question 21

Completing the melody was the question candidates were most likely to omit. Of the eight notes required, a few candidates managed 2 or 3, or the melodic shape for a mark and a smaller number managed more for two marks. A very small number of candidates were completely correct. A significant number of candidates did not use the rhythm given above the staff.

Question 22

About a quarter of candidates correctly identified the use of repetition. Imitation was a common incorrect answer and some candidates wrote answers which were not compositional devices.

Question 23

Candidates who wrote some kind of third (i.e. minor, perfect, augmented or diminished) received one mark, while candidates who correctly identified the interval as a major third received both marks. No credit was given for intervals such as major second.

Question 24

Candidates sometimes gained one mark for this question for a general description of the rising chromatic scale in repeated crotchets played in unison by strings (without the harpsichord). Credit was given for remarks such as 'a note on every beat by step'. However, very few candidates gave enough information to be awarded both marks.

Question 25

When comparing bars 40–43 of the extract with bars 29–34 candidates often noticed that it was the same melody. Fewer could describe how it was different (in a minor key, the oboe playing arpeggios above or a detailed description of the terraced dynamics in bars 40–43).

Question 26

Just over half the candidates gained a mark for choosing the correct answer of concerto. Symphony was a common incorrect answer.

Question 27

- (a) Well over half the candidates gained the mark for correctly stating that the music was from the Baroque period or gave a date/dates within the Baroque period
- (b) Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark for this question, with nearly all mentioning the presence of the harpsichord, followed by terraced dynamics, the use of a small/string orchestra and ornamentation. There were several mentions of polyphony/counterpoint, but, although this is often a feature of Baroque music, it was not present in this extract.
- (c) Just over half the candidates chose the correct answer of Vivaldi, with Haydn being the most common incorrect answer.

D1

Question 28

- (a) Very few candidates were able to state that the music was in D major.
- (b) Candidates did not know that D major was related to the key of the movement as the tonic major (the movement is in D minor). Most candidates gained either 2 or 0 marks for this question, with both notes either correct (a small number of candidates) or incorrect.

Question 29

A variety of answers were given for this question, including some instances where candidates were trying to transpose different notes. Most candidates gained either 2 or 0 marks for this question.

Question 30

- (a) Candidates were not able to explain the modal shift. Major to minor was not given credit, only D major to D minor or (2nd violins play) F sharp then F natural.
- (b) A small number of candidates knew that the section of the movement beginning in bar 12 was the Coda.
- (c) Even fewer candidates gained a mark here than in part (b), for correctly stating that the music from bars 12–18 of the extract was first heard in the transition (bridge passage was also accepted).

Question 31

Candidates who knew that the symphony was published later / fourth or that the symphony was revised and published after Mendelssohn's death received a mark for this question.

D2

Question 32

- (a) A small number of candidates knew that the part of the Exposition beginning at the start of the extract was the transition. The question required candidates to name a part of the Exposition, however some wrote answers such as Development.
- (b) Even fewer candidates than in part (a) gained a mark here for knowing that the purpose of a transition in an Exposition section is to modulate.
- (c) Very few candidates gained any credit here, despite the fact that there were three ways in which bars 1–3² contrasted with music heard earlier in the movement (it is now strings only, in octaves (unison was accepted) / monophonic texture and there were quavers rather than triplets / simple time).

Question 33

- (a) Very few candidates correctly identified the 2nd subject.
- (b) An extremely small number of candidates knew that the 2nd subject is related to the 1st subject by having the same rhythm. Answers which just mentioned use of triplets were not given credit.
- (c) A reasonable number of candidates chose the correct answer of dominant pedal.

Question 34

A few candidates explained clearly that the symphony was inspired by Mendelssohn's travels to Italy. Answers such as 'it was written by an Italian composer' were not given credit.

D3

Question 35

A small number of candidates gained one mark for this question, usually for mentioning that the theme is now played in imitation.

Question 36

As with **Question 30**, candidates usually received either 2 or 0 marks for this question, writing either both or neither of the notes correctly. The ledger lines occasionally seemed to cause problems (for example, candidates positioned the second note lower than the first, but still with only one ledger line). No credit was given for candidates who wrote the notes in the wrong octave.

A few candidates gained a mark for recognising one of the instances of imitation. Very few candidates gained both the marks available.

Question 37

About a quarter of the candidates knew that the Codetta started in bar 25³.

Question 38

Nearly half the candidates gained the mark for stating that the solo exposition/first clarinet/repeat of the first subject would be heard next.

D4

Question 39

- (a) Relatively few candidates knew that the section of the movement which began at the start of the extract was the transition (bridge passage was accepted).
- (b) Some candidates recognised that this question was related to modulation, but very few were able to explain precisely enough that it was because the music did not need to modulate.

Question 40

Less than a quarter of the candidates knew that this was the second subject.

Question 41

Very few candidates gained more than one mark of the three available for this question. A few were able to note that the violin took over the melody, even fewer mentioned the addition of the clarinet countermelody and hardly any correctly named the key (F sharp minor).

Question 42

A small number of candidates gave enough detail to receive one of the two marks available. A very small number gained both marks. There was some confusion with valves (as found on brass instruments), with the clarinet as a transposing instrument and with the basset clarinet.

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

Candidates should be reminded that answers should only describe features of musical styles which are actually heard in the extracts and should be specific to the questions asked.

General comments

Some candidates gave detailed responses to the first sections of the paper. However, most candidates needed to show a stronger understanding of their chosen set work. Knowledge of these was usually extremely limited.

Comments on specific questions

A1

Question 1

This question was often not answered well. The incorrect options which started with an ascending interval were selected as frequently as those which started with a descending interval.

Question 2

Candidates answered this question fairly well. The most common correct observations were the major key, high or rising pitch (often correctly linked to reflecting the meaning of the word 'highest') and full orchestra or choir.

Question 3

The most common correct observations noted the use of solo singers and the reduced orchestration/dynamic level. The strongest answers also noted the imitative texture or the move to a minor key.

Question 4

Many candidates correctly identified the Classical period and Mozart as the composer, but the Romantic period was stated often as well.

A2

Question 5

This was very well answered.

Question 6

Most candidates answered this correctly.

Question 7

Most candidates correctly gave a suitable tempo marking such as Allegro or Allegretto, but a number gave a tempo which was too slow.

Question 8

There were many good descriptions of neo-classicism, but some candidates demonstrated a lack of knowledge of this style. The neo-classical features in the extract which were most commonly identified were the harpsichord and regular phrase lengths. Some candidates referred to the use of brass instruments but did not explain how this was different from their use in baroque/classical music. A few candidates incorrectly described the music as very dissonant.

B1

Question 9

This was answered fairly well, but many candidates gave C major as an answer, suggesting they were relying on looking at the music rather than listening closely.

Question 10

Most candidates gained some credit for a recognition of melody and accompaniment, but fewer provided sufficient accurate detail to gain full credit.

Question 11

This question was quite well answered. Incorrect answers included binary, but more commonly terms or descriptions which were unrelated to structure.

Question 12

Most candidates identified Latin America. Pan pipes or guitars were the most common correct instruments. Some candidates suggested bandoneon. These candidates recognised that this instrument features in some Latin American music, but it did not appear in this extract.

B2

Question 13 and 14

All subsections of these questions were answered well. Most candidates were able to identify and describe the main features of Gamelan music. Incorrect suggestions here tended to be either Gagaku or African music.

B3

Question 15

The erhu was incorrectly given as often as the correct answer gaohu, but the instrument was usually described correctly as a bowed string instrument.

Question 16

Most candidates could define heterophonic texture, but were far less precise in relating it to the music in the extract, with very little correct detail given in most cases.

Question 17

The most common correct observations here were the use of the pentatonic scale and pitch bending. Correct descriptions of the metre were rare.

Question 18

The performance contexts of this music were not well understood.

C1

Question 19

Most candidates correctly identified F major.

Question 20

Many candidates struggled with this question. A very large number of candidates completely ignored the rhythm which was given and wrote a different number of notes.

Question 21

Repetition was often confused with sequence or imitation.

Question 22

The descriptions here were usually vague, and it was rare for an answer to be precise enough to gain full marks.

Question 23

This was well answered. Many candidates identified the interval fully. Some correctly stated it as a sixth but described it incorrectly as minor, or even perfect.

Question 24

Relatively few candidates recognised that this was the same melody played in a minor key.

Question 25

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 26

This question was usually answered well. Most candidates correctly identified Vivaldi and the Baroque period, and the most common reasons given were the harpsichord, terraced dynamics and ornamentation.

D1

Question 27

A few candidates knew the set work in sufficient detail to answer this structural question correctly. However, most candidates demonstrated no knowledge of the structure or any differences in the music.

Question 28

The dominant pedal was often correctly identified, but the other parts of this question were not answered well.

Question 29

Few candidates were able to answer this question correctly.

D2

Question 30

Some candidates correctly identified D major, but only a few knew this was the tonic major.

Question 31

The transposing was relatively successful.

Question 32

The different parts of this question were only answered well by a small number of candidates.

Question 33

Candidates who had studied the context of the set work answered correctly, but many answers to this question were not successful.

D3

Question 34

- (a) Few answers described the pedal, but the violin doubling was sometimes mentioned (although not always very precisely).
- (b) The most common correct observation here was recognition of the lighter accompaniment.

Question 35

This question was fairly well answered, with many aspects of the clarinet writing described accurately. Most candidates gained at least partial credit here.

Question 36

Most candidates correctly identified the first subject from the solo exposition.

D4

Question 37

The transposing was often done well.

Question 38

Many candidates correctly identified E major as the dominant key.

Question 39

Very few answers correctly identified this music as being a combination of the first and second subjects.

Question 40

Many candidates correctly identified the development section.

Question 41

This question was often not well answered. Some candidates wrote answers referring to the basset clarinet.

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

Candidates should ensure that their answers relate to the music they have heard in the extract and not music from the particular period or culture in general. For example, just because a piece is from the Baroque period it does not mean that it will definitely have a polyphonic texture.

Candidates are becoming more confident in using terminology for sonata-form movements, but this was often used incorrectly.

General comments

Candidates gave some detailed responses to the first sections of the paper. In questions on texture, candidates used relevant vocabulary but it was sometimes incorrect.

Answers to questions on the set world focus and the set works were very variable. Some candidates knew the music of the region or the work in great detail while others gained very few marks on these extracts.

Only about a quarter of candidates studied Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony* (Movements 2 and 4) as their set work, with the majority of candidates studying Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* (Movement 1). Very occasionally candidates seem uncertain as to which work they had studied or where they should write their answers in the question paper.

Comments on specific questions

A1

Question 1

- (a) Many candidates selected the correct answer of semitone, but candidates also selected other answers.
- (b) Many candidates correctly identified line 5 as the line where the accompanying ostinato changed. However, line 6 was a frequent incorrect answer and some candidates selected a line much later in the extract.

Question 2

Credit was given only for alto, which the majority of candidates wrote.

Question 3

Stronger candidates correctly identified the oboe, with many others suggesting flute, trumpet or violin.

Question 4

Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark of the three available for this question, with the triple time signature, um-cha-cha accompaniment/strong first beat of the bar and fast tempo/one in a bar frequently gaining credit. Other accepted answers seen less frequently were the contrasting legato and staccato articulation, the lyrical melody, one chord per bar and the regular phrases.

Question 5

Nearly all candidates correctly identified the extract as being from a musical.

A2

Question 6

Some candidates selected the correct answer of pizzicato, as the effect the strings used when the playing the accompaniment at the start of the extract. Arco was a frequent incorrect answer, but one of the other two options was also sometimes chosen.

Question 7

Many candidates were able to gain both marks, usually for noticing that the strings were playing scales. A few candidates noticed the horns.

Question 8

Responses to this question suggested that some candidates were unsure which repetition of the melody they were listening to. However, many candidates were able to gain all four marks available for this question (two for each repetition). This was most frequently for stating that on the second repeat, the melody was played by trombones/tubas, another octave lower, cymbal crashes and it was louder. For the third repeat candidates often noted that the melody was played by the woodwind (since it is played by the flute and oboe these named instruments were accepted, but not clarinet), that the strings playing lightly in the rests and that it was quieter.

Question 9

Stravinsky was a common incorrect answer, but many candidates selected the correct answer of Tchaikovsky as the composer.

B1

Question 10

Although many candidates gave the correct answer of sitar, there were many incorrect answers, including instruments from other parts of the world.

Question 11

- (a) As with **Question 10**, a wide variety of answers were seen, including instruments from other cultures and instruments which were wind instruments.
- (b) Nearly all candidates gained a mark for saying that the instrument was bowed and many more gained a mark here than did in (a).

Question 12

- (a) The majority of candidates recognised that the extract was from an Indian piece of music.
- (b) Candidates who gained both marks for this question frequently noted the presence of a drone and the use of pitch bending. A small number of candidates referred to the free metre/rhythm.

B2

Question 13

Although many candidates correctly identified that the texture was heterophonic, few were able to continue their answer with material to gain the further two marks. Some candidates were able to describe the role of the gong or drum sufficiently clearly to gain a further mark or two, but many candidates did not refer to the nuclear theme or the part with faster-moving notes.

Question 14

Nearly all candidates heard that the music slowed down.

Question 15

- (a) A large number of candidates knew that the ensemble was called Gamelan.
- (b) Even more candidates gained a mark for Java or Indonesia (Bali was also accepted) than did in (a).

B3

Question 16

Since the question stated that the instrument was bowed, no credit was available for this. Many candidates correctly identified the gaohu, but many named the erhu instead and there were also other instruments suggested, some of which are not bowed. Candidates who gained the mark for describing the instrument usually stated that it had two strings or that it was smaller or higher than the erhu. Candidates were awarded credit for a correct description even if they had not correctly named the instrument.

Question 17

Many of the candidates gained a mark for pentatonic scale, but only a few correctly explained the passing tones for the second mark.

Question 18

Some candidates gained a mark for heterophonic texture, but fewer noticed or mentioned the initial monophonic texture.

Question 19

Many candidates were able to gain at least one of the three marks available for this question, by stating that the music got faster. Giving more detail and naming specific passages allowed some candidates to access a second mark, but three marks were only available to those who mentioned both metre and tempo.

Question 20

Many suggestions were given for this question, such as courts, palaces, theatres, but only tea houses (as stated in the Guidance Notes) was accepted.

C1

Question 21

Many of the answers were fully correct. Candidates who suggested some other kind of fourth (augmented/major/diminished) received partial credit. Candidates who named another interval (e.g. perfect fifth, minor third) did not receive credit for this question.

Question 22

Many candidates were able to gain at least one mark for completing the melody, often with either the last two notes in bar 8 or two of the notes in bar 9. The ledger lines caused problems for some candidates and very few added the C sharp accidental at the end of bar 9.

Question 23

Candidates were often able to recognise that it was the opening melody that was being repeated and some went on to say that it was at a lower pitch or in a different key.

Question 24

- (a) Candidates more frequently gained the mark for perfect than for A minor (with some very distant keys being suggested).
- (b) Few candidates received a mark for correctly stating that it is the dominant key.

Question 25

Most candidate gained at least partial credit, either for recognising that the melodic shape was the same as at the start or by noting one of the differences. The use of decoration was the most frequently seen answer.

Question 26

Few candidates gained the mark for stating that the music is decorated.

Question 27

- (a) Nearly all candidates correctly stated that the music was from the Baroque period.
- (b) Most candidates were able to gain credit for this question, with nearly all mentioning the presence of the harpsichord.

D1

Question 28

- (a) Many candidates were unable to state that this music was the first subject and that it was in the tonic/A minor.
- (b) Even fewer candidates could explain that this point in the extract was not the Recapitulation because it was only four bars long/not complete.

Question 29

Very few candidates recognised that this music was first heard in the transition (bridge passage was also accepted).

Question 30

Some candidates answering this question were able to gain a mark for Coda.

Question 31

Only the strongest candidates knew that the music was derived from the first movement.

Question 32

In answers to this question some candidates gained full credit with both notes correct but a number did not gain any credit. No credit was given for candidates who wrote the notes in the wrong octave.

D2

Question 33

- (a) Only the strongest candidates answered this question correctly most often stating that the melody was played by the oboe/bassoons/violas. Hardly any candidates attempted to describe the structure.
- (b) Candidates sometimes gained at least one of the two marks available, often for noting that the melody was now an octave higher or that it was played by the violins. A small number mentioned the added (flute) counter melody, but none of the candidates referred to the small changes to the bass line.

Question 34

Some candidates were able to gain at least one of the marks available here, with answers frequently referring to either 'religious' features of the music, such as the fact that the monophonic opening with the rising and falling semitones sounds like a call to prayer. Others referred to the bass line staccato quavers. However, few candidates gained all three possible marks.

D3

Question 35

Some candidates were able to gain one of the two marks, for noting that the theme is now played in imitation. Few candidates gained full credit.

Question 36

- (a) Some candidates answered this fully correctly but many did not gain any marks on this question. As with **Question 22**, the ledger lines occasionally seemed to cause problems (for example, candidates positioned the second note lower than the first, but still with only one ledger line). No credit was given for candidates who wrote the notes in the wrong octave.
- (b) Candidates were sometimes able to gain one of the two marks, for some description of one of the instances of imitation. Very few candidates mentioned that the melody was doubled in thirds.

Question 37

Some candidates knew that the Codetta started in bar 25³.

Question 38

Many candidates gained the mark for stating that the solo exposition/first clarinet/repeat of the first subject would be heard next.

D4

Question 39

- (a) Only stronger candidates knew that the section of the movement which began at the start of the extract was the transition (bridge passage was accepted).
- (b) Some candidates recognised that this question was something to do with modulation, but very few were able to explain precisely enough that it was because the music did not need to modulate.

Question 40

A small number of candidates knew that this was the second subject.

Question 41

Very few candidates gained more than one mark for this question. Some were able to note that the violin took over the melody. Fewer mentioned the addition of the clarinet countermelody and hardly any could correctly name the key (F sharp minor).

Question 42

- (a) Some candidates knew that the concerto had been written for Anton Stadler.
- (b) More candidates selected the incorrect answer of Theater an der Wien, Vienna, than the correct answer of National Theatre, Prague.

MUSIC

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

Key messages

Candidates are required to perform for at least four minutes.
Ensemble repertoire should allow candidates to demonstrate the full range of their skills.

General comments

The majority of the coursework fully met the syllabus requirements, was well presented and assessed accurately, making for straightforward moderation. The moderators enjoyed hearing a wide range of performances; these inevitably varied in standard but in most cases, the repertoire chosen was appropriate to the candidates' abilities, which is crucial to a successful performance.

Most performances were of 'classical' music, but the increase of vocal performances in pop genres noted last year continued again. All genres are equally welcome at IGCSE, but it was observed by the moderators that in many cases vocal pop performances seem to have had very little preparation beyond picking a backing track and singing along. Vocal technique and expression are equally important in all styles, and marks must be awarded according to the descriptors in the mark scheme, not against a notional perception of how much like the original the candidate's version is. It should also be noted that the lyrics of some of the songs submitted this year were not appropriate in the context of school coursework.

Centres are again reminded that there is a minimum performing time of four minutes; those candidates who are performing short pieces should add a second solo and/or ensemble piece to ensure they meet the syllabus requirements. Where candidates do not meet the required time they may not have sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their skills fully in order to achieve the highest marks. Teachers should be mindful to check performing length when awarding marks, as only in a very few cases were short performances noted in the comments box and marks awarded appropriately.

Solos

The solo performances were usually the most successful part of the coursework, consisting of well-chosen repertoire. Accuracy was usually good and most pieces were performed at an appropriate tempo. Sensitivity to phrasing and expression was often less impressive, and intonation was sometimes poor. As noted last year, where solo music has been written with an accompaniment, this should always be played.

Ensembles

It was in the ensemble performances where most issues arose, although it should be stressed that the vast majority of centres submitted pieces which met the syllabus requirements.

To reiterate, the following types of performance are not acceptable as ensembles:

Solos: pieces described as 'ensembles' but which consist of only one performer. The syllabus does not allow a second solo performance (whether or not on a second instrument) instead of an ensemble.

Accompanied solos: pieces in which there are more than two performers, but the candidate's part is still clearly a solo. Examples often include solo songs in which drums and/or bass have been added in addition to the piano accompaniment; this is still a solo song for the singer. More extreme examples include candidates playing a piano solo to which a bass instrument had been added, for example, perhaps simply doubling the left hand. This does not change the fact that the candidate is still clearly playing solo repertoire.

Vocal 'duets' (usually from musical theatre repertoire): pieces where the vocal parts consist 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 must not be included in an ensemble performance – ensembles must only include live performers.

There were a few examples where centres submitted one ensemble piece with all candidates (typically five or six) performing together. Whilst there is nothing wrong with this in principle – and in fact there can be many positive reasons for doing so during the course of teaching this syllabus – it is essential that the parts are properly differentiated in such pieces. For example, some pianists who had played impressive solos at a high standard were given basic, single-handed keyboard parts in ensemble performances, significantly limiting the marks they could achieve compared to their ability.

Assessment

Most of the coursework was assessed accurately. Where marking was inaccurate it was usually (though not exclusively) lenient, often significantly so. A small number of centres have their marks substantially reduced every single year, and they are strongly encouraged to heed the advice given on their feedback forms, using the examples which can be found on the School Support Hub to help understand the expected standard.

In general, the 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.

The mark for choice and control of tempo was also usually reasonably accurate, but for ensemble co-ordination the marks were often lenient, with pieces which were moderately well co-ordinated being given very high marks.

The most common leniency was in the mark for phrasing and expression, where a lack of any dynamic contrast was often rewarded as moderate. Choice of piece is important here, as pieces need to be chosen that give some opportunity for a candidate to demonstrate expressive qualities: this is sometimes difficult for rock or pop styles, but it is possible, with thought. Poor intonation and/or tone quality were factors that most often contributed to candidates not accessing the highest mark for technical control.

Centres are reminded that internal moderation is only expected 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. If internal moderation does result in marks being changed, the working marksheets should be annotated accordingly, not just the summary sheet.

Presentation of coursework

Most coursework was presented in a helpful format, but please do not send an individual CD per candidate – it is more helpful for the moderators when the work of the candidates is placed on as few CDs as possible (with an accurate track listing). Please note the following advice:

The work must be submitted on CD, not DVD or memory stick

CDs should be sent with a separate track listing, which should not be written on the CD itself

CDs must be burned as audio CDs which are playable on a CD player

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 label each set of sheet music with the candidate's details

Please do not staple the marksheets to the sheet music

Send the performing coursework separately from the composing

MUSIC

Paper 0410/03
Composing

Key messages

Centres should not award credit for any compositional ideas that are not created by the candidate. Candidates should be encouraged to compose pieces which allow them to fulfil the whole range of the assessment criteria. Care should be taken to ensure that marks are correctly added and correctly transcribed onto the form submitted to Cambridge.

General comments

A wide range of ability was demonstrated in the compositions submitted this year, with some candidates working 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. Some centres awarded high marks to work which was not as strong as these marks indicated.

The standard of administration by centres was mainly quite good. However, there were several instances of incorrect addition of marks and inaccurate transcription of marks from one form to another. In some cases there was missing documentation and assessment materials, including Working Mark Sheets, Computer Mark Sheets, recordings and even scores. Several centres did not comply with the requirement that CDs must be playable on a standard domestic CD player.

Assessment

Some centres marked accurately and consistently showing full understanding of the published criteria. However, there were many cases in which all the candidates in a centre were assessed generously, or where the marking did not match the descriptors. There were very few instances where the internal marks were too low.

Internal moderation of marks must only be carried out when there is more than one teacher involved in teaching the course and in the assessment. If there is a single teaching group with a single teacher, there is no need for internal moderation. A few centres seem to be using this process as a mechanism for changing the total mark without reference to the assessment criteria, which is not permitted. Where more than one teacher is involved in the assessment, they need to be certain that they are applying the same standard, and this is the sole purpose of internal moderation. If marks are changed during this process, the changes must be shown on the Individual Working Mark Sheets as well as on the Summary Mark Sheet, so that the CIE Moderator can see exactly which marks have been changed (whether it was the mark for Ideas, or Structure, or Compositional Technique, etc.).

Compositions

There was a very wide range of styles in the submitted compositions. The strongest were accomplished compositions, reflecting a commendably high level of inventiveness and understanding. A large number of candidates used quite simple structures, with a tendency to use the 'copy and paste' facility on the computer rather too readily. This year there were several pieces in which candidates had tried to use minimalist techniques. Although these were sometimes successful, more often the technique was applied too mechanically, often producing a formulaic result that was not very musical.

A simple structure such as Ternary Form can sometimes be very effective, especially if the sections link together smoothly with some kind of relationship between the A and B sections, and if the return of the A section is varied appropriately, rather than being indicated simply with a DC marking. However, even the

simplest of Ternary Forms should be awarded more marks than a very short piece in a single section. There were several of these, some as short as 16 bars or even fewer, and in some cases these pieces had been given marks as high as nine for their Structure. Pieces in a single section, which allow no scope for linking passages, varied repeats or other structural devices, need to be rewarded with a mark in the lower bands of the mark scheme.

In some centres, it appeared that candidates had not made their own decisions about what to compose, but had been given tasks to complete, set by the teacher. While this approach may be appropriate in the early stages of the course, it should not be used in the pieces that candidates submit for assessment because it often results in unduly formulaic pieces. When candidates choose what to compose for themselves, they are more able to demonstrate the full extent of their creativity.

Candidates' ability to use chords and to harmonise their melodic ideas is assessed under Compositional Technique. Some compositions demonstrated very effective use of harmony, but many were quite limited in this respect. There were many examples of root position chords spaced too closely at too low a pitch (e.g. in piano parts), a general lack of inversions, or the layering of instrumental parts with too little attention to the resulting harmony. Several candidates had difficulty in the use of cadences at the ends of phrases or sections.

Pre-recorded loops (from applications such as Garage Band) should not be used. Candidates must acknowledge the source of any materials in their compositions that they did not compose themselves. This includes any borrowed themes used for sets of variations. Centres are reminded that it is only the candidate's compositional input into such pieces that can be rewarded.

The two compositions produced by each candidate must use different instrumental or vocal forces. If they do not, the mark for Use of Medium in Piece 2 must be zero. This requirement was not always observed. In some cases, candidates had written one piece for flute and piano for example, with the second piece for oboe and piano but with very generic parts for the flute and oboe, which made them indistinguishable from each other. Another example concerns a Piece 1 for solo piano and a Piece 2 also for piano, but with the bass notes doubled by a cello. These combinations do not satisfy the specification for this component, the point of which is to ensure that candidates submit two pieces that are genuinely contrasting.

Notation and Presentation

There were many computer generated scores but there were some handwritten scores. In order to understand how to use a notation program on the computer, candidates need to know how to write their music down by hand, so candidates should consider submitting handwritten scores. Candidates should be encouraged to take care over the presentation of such scores to ensure they are clear and legible. Computer generated scores also need to be presented carefully. Several candidates had trouble with rests, especially if they played in the music in real time, where (for example) staccato crotchets are often represented as semiquavers followed by a succession of rests. The default settings used by the program did not always produce the correct result, and this needed to be checked.

Default settings can also produce an illogical order of instruments in a score. A piece for flute, cello and piano, for example, should have the flute part at the top of the score, then the cello part and the piano should be below the cello. But in an orchestral score, the woodwind are at the top, with the strings at the bottom, and a piano would be somewhere in the middle, usually near the percussion. So it is not uncommon to find this orchestral order of instruments used by default even when it is not appropriate with the flute at the top, the piano next, and the cello at the bottom.

These two aspects of computer generated scores (incorrect rests and an inappropriate order of instruments) are two issues that could easily have been corrected if the scores had been carefully edited. There was little evidence to suggest that this editing had been done at all, except in a minority of cases.

Whenever possible, even if they find it hard, candidates must try to notate their music. If they are writing a song, they should notate at least the voice part. The lyrics alone, with a few chord symbols, are not sufficient.

Some candidates submitted screen shots of the computer program they had used to create their pieces. In the very rare circumstances where this may be appropriate, such screen shots must always be accompanied by a detailed explanation of what it represents, how it should be read and how it relates to the submitted recording.

Candidates should note that if a piece is capable of being notated conventionally, using staff notation, that is how it should be presented. The Syllabus makes provision for other forms of notation to be used, but only in cases where it would not be possible to use staff notation (some forms of electro-acoustic music, for example). It does not mean that an alternative notation can be used if a candidate has not acquired the skills of using staff notation.

Recorded Performances

Most of the recordings submitted were of synthesised performances, often simply the computer playback of the Sibelius or Finale score. The best recordings were almost always of live performances. Centres are encouraged to submit live recordings whenever possible, since they are more instructive to candidates and they also convey the spirit of a composition much more effectively than a synthesiser can ever do.

Recordings of songs suffer much more than instrumental pieces if the performance is synthesised. There were several examples this year of songs where the recording was synthesised and where the number of notes in the melody did not even vaguely correspond to the number of words or syllables in the lyrics. An attempt to perform live (especially at an earlier stage in the course) could have provided an extremely valuable opportunity for teaching about this significant aspect of song-writing, and this could have helped the candidates concerned to gain higher marks.

CDs

Most CDs were formatted so that they played on a standard CD player, as required. Centres are reminded 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 included a recording of an orchestral piece where the string parts were entirely omitted, and a piece for flute and piano in which the whole 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 where there are several candidates, the recordings must be compiled onto a single CD. Separate CDs for each individual candidate should be avoided. There should be recorded announcements on the CD to identify each candidate's compositions, and the recordings should be compiled in the order of candidate numbers, with both pieces for each candidate following on from each other. A separate track list, not written on the CD itself, should also be included.