

MUSIC

Paper 0410/01

Listening

Key messages

- Questions on style should focus on the musical features actually heard in the extract.
- Questions on texture still present difficulties for many candidates.
- Familiarity with the set work is essential for success in Section E.

General comments

This was the first examination of the shortened question paper, and Examiners were pleased with the level of attainment in general. Virtually all of the candidates attempted all of the questions, and whilst the level of achievement varied, some good marks were achieved overall. Last year's report commented on the number of candidates who, in questions about musical style, wrote what they knew about a style in general and not what they heard in the extract. Unfortunately, this was often the case again this year, particularly in **Questions 5 and 9**. The questions on texture were often not answered well.

The questions on world music in **Section D** were answered very well by many candidates, but it was noticeable that candidates seemed far less secure on Arab Music than they did on African Music. As in previous years the answers in **Section E** were variable. Once again, some candidates knew their set work thoroughly and gained very high marks, but others seemed to have very little knowledge of the work and gained very low marks.

Comments on specific questions

Music A1

- 1 Allegro / allegretto / vivace / alla marcia/ vivo / con brio. Very well answered.
- 2 Sequence and imitation. Fairly well answered.
- 3 It is in a different key. Sung by male voices not female. It is louder and more instruments play. Very well answered – most candidates commented on the louder dynamic and the change in voice type.
- 4 **Sections 1 – 3:** The music is lively / joyful /fast / loud / reference to crescendo / major key. **Section 4:** It is quieter / slower / there are fewer instruments. Well answered.
- 5 Large orchestra. Prominent use of brass instruments. Unexpected modulations. Extreme / dramatic / wide range of dynamics. Some chromaticism.

This question was well answered; most candidates focused on the orchestra and the dynamics. A few candidates wrote about romantic music in general, without referring to features actually heard in the extract.

Music A2

- 6 Canon / imitation / repetition. Well answered.
- 7 Off-beat /syncopated chords are played by the full orchestra. It is a homophonic accompaniment. Fairly well answered.
- 8 Trumpet. Well answered in general.

- 9 (a) Jazz. Fairly well answered, although a common error was to choose impressionism.
- (b) Use of syncopation. Use of blue notes / blues scale. Saxophones in the orchestra. Techniques such as flutter-tonguing. Pitch bending. Fairly well answered, with syncopation being the most common correct answer.

Candidates who had stated impressionism for part (a) tended to write about features of impressionist music which were not heard in the extract.

- 10 Gershwin. Fairly well answered, although a number of candidates stated Debussy.

Music B1

- 11 An ascending glissando. Well answered.
- 12 Bandoneon / accordion / concertina. Well answered.
- 13 It is in a minor key. The rhythm is syncopated and the articulation is mostly very staccato / accented. It is a tango / dance. 4/4 time.

Most candidates gained at least some credit here, and many scored two or three marks. A surprising number of candidates incorrectly stated the key was major.

- 14 Argentina / Latin America.

Well answered, although a number of the incorrect responses named European countries which do not feature in this section of the examination.

Music B2

- 15 The melody of bar 11 is repeated. Well answered.
- 16 The melody is played in octaves. There is a bass line and off beat chords. It is homophonic / melody and accompaniment.

Answers were variable to this question; many candidates did not appear to understand what was meant by texture, and others incorrectly described the texture as heterophonic.

- 17 (a) China. Well answered.
- (b) Pentatonic scale. Er-hu / percussion / Chinese orchestra etc. Instrumental effects such as pitch bending / ornamentation. Repeated melodies.

Fairly well answered.

Music C1

- 18 E flat (major). Well answered.
- 19 Horn. Well answered. Those candidates who were incorrect usually stated trumpet or trombone.
- 20 Bb Ab F Bb G Eb. A wide variety of responses.
- 21 Imperfect. Fairly well answered, but many candidates stated interrupted or perfect.
- 22 Minor third. Fairly well answered, but major third was a common mistake.
- 23 (a) 16 or 17 – 46 or 47. Well answered, although not all candidates gave bar numbers for the start and finish of the section.
- (b) Dialogue / call and response between horn and orchestra. Horn plays over a wider range with greater dynamic contrast. Shorter phrases. Modulation to the dominant. More lyrical / legato.

Most candidates gained at least some credit, with the dialogue between horn and oboe being the most common correct answer. Vague responses such as “it is a different melodic line” were not sufficient at this level to gain credit.

24 Mozart. Fairly well answered.

Music D1

25 ‘Ūd. A wide variety of responses. Surprisingly, some of these named instruments from a totally different part of the world.

26 They play heterophonically in octaves. There is a rhythm played by percussion instruments. Very few candidates commented that the instruments were playing in octaves.

27 Īqā / Īqā’āt. A variety of responses.

28 Melodic phrases using a narrow range of notes based on a maqam or use of microtones/quarter-tones. No harmony. Repeated motifs / repetitive. Ornamentation / pitch-bending.

Fairly well answered.

Music D2

29 Xylophone / balafon / marimba. Very well answered.

30 It plays a repeated / ostinato / syncopated rhythm in two parts. Well answered, with most candidates spotting at least the ostinato.

31 The first / male voice starts alone. The second / female voice sings in harmony in a call and response style. Very well answered.

32 Use of syncopation. Ostinato rhythms / layers of rhythms / polyrhythms. Call and response. Well answered.

Music D3

33 (a) Ryuteki / shakuhachi / komabue. Fairly well answered.

(b) Hichiriki. Some correct answers, but many stated ‘sho’.

(c) They play heterophonically in octaves. Many candidates described the physical relationship between the instruments (e.g. they are both blown) rather than the musical relationship.

34 (a) Jo. Well answered.

(b) It is slow / rhythmically free / instruments join in gradually. Well answered.

Music D4

35 Koto / shamisen / biwa. Well answered.

36 It plays single notes / in octaves followed by a descending glissando. After more single notes there is an ascending glissando. Fragmentary structure. Little sense of pulse.

Well answered, with most candidates gaining at least one mark.

37 There is now a clear melody / the texture changes to melody and accompaniment. It becomes homophonic / koto provides the accompaniment. There is more sense of pulse. Credit was given for some description of the accompaniment, e.g. arpeggios / scale patterns. Very well answered.

38 Through composed. Small number of instruments. Melody with flowing accompaniment. No percussion. Very well answered.

Music E1

- 39 B flat (major). A variety of responses – F major was a frequent incorrect answer.
- 40 A – B natural. A variety of responses. Credit was given for transposition to either octave.
- 41 (a) Concertino. Fairly well answered.
- (b) Ripieno. Fairly well answered.
- (c) Ritornello. Well answered.
- 42 Circle of fifths. Fairly well answered.
- 43 It is a continuo instrument which fills in the harmony / plays chords by realising a figured bass. Most candidates gained some credit.

Music E2

- 44 It is in a major key, begins higher and has been extended by repeating the quaver – semiquaver motif. Many candidates gained one mark, but few were able to describe the difference in enough detail to gain two.
- A number of candidates incorrectly compared the passage to the first movement.
- 45 They imitate each other and play in pairs a third / sixth apart. They play in harmony. A variety of responses.
- 46 Broken chords / arpeggios in quavers which descend in sequence. Fairly well answered.
- 47 (a) Key: G minor; Cadence: Perfect. The key was often incorrect, although more candidates named the cadence correctly.
- (b) Subdominant. A variety of responses.

Music E3

- 48 The main melody / T1 starting in the dominant. This question was not answered well in general.
- Only a few candidates knew that the main melody was being played, and fewer still commented on the change in key.
- 49 (a) Key: C major; Cadence: Perfect. Fairly well answered, although F major was a common error.
- (b) Dominant. Fairly well answered.
- 50 (a) Ternary. Well answered.
- (b) It is the B section / middle section / trio. Well answered,
- 51 Use of drone. Scotch snap rhythm. Repetitive melody in short phrases. Imitates Austrian dance music.
- This question was not answered well, with very few candidates making more than one valid point.

Music E4

- 52 Allegro. Well answered.
- 53 F minor. A wide variety of responses.
- 54 F – Db. A variety of responses.

55

Instrumental writing: Tremolando strings, timpani roll and low string notes / patterns.
Full orchestra = storm. Use of piccolo = wind. Staccato violin quavers = rain. Rapid
arpeggios = lightning. Harmony: Much use of diminished sevenths and minor keys. Dynamic
very loud dynamics with occasional *sf* markings. Crescendos.

This question was well answered.

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Paper 0410/02
Performing

Key messages

Solo performances were usually very well prepared, but Ensemble performances were not always well suited to the candidates' abilities, or did not demonstrate genuine ensemble skills.

General comments

The Moderators were pleased to hear performances on a range of instruments or voice, in a wide variety of styles. The standard of some performances was very high indeed, but it is always pleasing to hear performances where the repertoire is well matched to the candidate's ability, no matter what stage their technical development is currently at. As in previous years, the choice of solo repertoire was generally good, although occasionally some candidates attempted to perform pieces that were too difficult for them with limited success. There still remain some problems with ensembles, as discussed below.

Solos

Most solo performances were well matched to the candidates' abilities, and had been carefully prepared. On occasion, however, candidates chose pieces which were too difficult for them. Sometimes this led to marks being lost in the areas of accuracy and tempo (particularly where candidates slowed down for particularly difficult passages) and almost always in the area of sensitivity to phrasing and expression, as these candidates were too focused on the technical challenges to pay attention to the interpretation of the music.

Ensembles

There were again some problems with the ensembles submitted by some candidates. The main problems were as follows:

- pieces in which the candidate played music which was simply a second solo, but announced as an ensemble
- pieces in which the candidate's part was consistently doubled
- pieces in which there were three instruments playing, but the candidate's part was still clearly solo repertoire – often a contrived third part had been added to a solo piece with piano accompaniment

If there is any doubt about the suitability of a piece, then please contact CIE who will be more than happy to provide guidance.

Once again, some candidates were given simple ensemble parts that did not reflect the level of ability they had shown in their solo performing. It is essential that the ensemble performing is not seen as some sort of hoop to jump through. Candidates should be given the opportunity to develop real ensemble skills throughout the course.

It is still necessary to remind some Centres 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.

However, in most cases, the ensemble performing was a great success, and it was most enjoyable for the Moderators to hear such a wide range of different ensemble types and repertoire.

Assessment

In general, most Centres marked the coursework realistically and accurately, with careful reference to the descriptors in the mark scheme and the standards set in the distance training pack. Centres are encouraged to use the comments box when awarding marks, as this can provide a clear focus on the assessment criteria.

There still remains some lenient marking, however; the usual advice is therefore repeated once more: to be gaining the highest marks, candidates need to perform for at least four minutes, at approximately Grade 4 or 5 Level. Some performances which lasted for barely two minutes were being given extremely high marks. The key point to note in assessing the performances is that candidates must demonstrate the skills described in each of the criteria – if they are performing for less than four minutes, it is not a consistent demonstration of the skills expected for the highest marks at IGCSE.

Presentation of coursework

The majority of the coursework was presented extremely helpfully. Virtually all of the coursework is now submitted on CD, with clear labelling of the discs and sheet music. Where the presentation was less helpful to the Moderators, the most common problems were:

- Only 10 candidates work submitted from some larger Centres – the requirements have now changed; the work of all candidates must be submitted, not just a sample
- No track listing for CDs
- CDs not divided into separate tracks
- CDs which could only be played on a computer, not a stereo
- Recordings suffering from external noise (eg people talking / doors banging)
- Sheet music presented haphazardly (e.g. not in candidate order, or with missing pages, or pages in the wrong order)
- No sheet music - 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.

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Paper 0410/3
Composing

Key messages

To gain marks in the highest band candidates should submit two contrasting compositions (either differing in style or written for different forces). The musical ideas should be the candidate's own (if a piece includes material borrowed from a pre-existing source, this should be kept to an absolute minimum). The pieces should be carefully structured and should demonstrate a developing command of appropriate compositional techniques. Both pieces should be fully and accurately notated (and carefully edited if produced through a computer notation program). A recording of both pieces should be provided (on CD if possible); whenever possible the recording should be of a live performance.

General comments

There was a marked improvement in the overall quality of the compositions submitted this year. The work still covered a wide range of attainment but it was clear that many candidates had tried very hard to produce compositions that were innovative and creative, with good aural perception and well-developed ideas.

The quality of administration by Centres was also much better than last year. There were a few problems caused by missing documentation, incorrect addition or transcription of marks and wrongly formatted CDs, but these were significantly fewer than last year.

Assessment

Internal marking by Centres was often lenient, although the majority of marks were in the correct band. It was often the case that marks at the upper end of the range were more generous than those lower down. In a few Centres the marking was very generous indeed throughout the whole range. There were a few cases where the marks bore little relation to the descriptors given in the Assessment Criteria and where the rank order of merit was demonstrably incorrect, so that the Moderators needed to re-mark the entire submission.

Compositions

The pieces submitted this year ranged from simple pieces for piano or for a single melody instrument to lengthy and ambitious works for full orchestra. The ambitious pieces were not necessarily more successful, since only candidates with an unusually developed understanding of the compositional process were able to demonstrate that they possessed the technique required. The best pieces invariably came from candidates who matched the length and scope of their pieces to their technical ability.

It is often difficult to judge exactly how long a piece should be; learning how to gauge this is one of the most important skills for a young composer to develop. It is worth remembering (especially at this level) that the more a candidate writes, the more scope there is for taking a wrong turn. In this year's submissions, that applied particularly to pieces that fell into several sections: such pieces were often uneven and would have benefited from the omission of the weakest section(s).

A number of pieces were based on folk tunes, or other pre-existing material. Under the heading of *Ideas*, candidates must be marked on their own individual contribution to the ideas contained in the piece, discounting any borrowed material. For this reason, pieces that consist of variations on a borrowed melody are unlikely to score a very high mark for *Ideas* (though they may still be strong in other respects).

The widespread use of technology has many benefits, one significant example being that it allows candidates to hear a simulation of their work through computer playback. One of the drawbacks of the use of technology is that it can give a false impression of the balance between instruments, especially in cases where exotic and unusual combinations of instruments are used. There were several pieces this year where

candidates were tempted to use a selection of instruments which would have been impossible to play satisfactorily in live performance.

Notation and Presentation

Most scores this year were computer generated. There were few handwritten scores, and some of these were barely adequate. Even if candidates intend to produce their final score on the computer, it is very useful for them to learn how to write a score by hand: only then can they begin to tell whether a computer score is actually correct, however impressive it may look at first glance. Internal marking of computer notations should take account of such matters as correct layout, accurate spelling of notes (e.g. the leading-note in G major should be written as F sharp, not G flat), correct and consistent placing of dynamics or avoidance of collisions between notes, dynamics and slurs. A mark of 10 should be awarded only if a score avoids these common pitfalls, and internal markers are asked to satisfy themselves that this is the case before awarding such a high mark.

Candidates who compose songs should always notate the voice part, at the very least. If they cannot also notate the accompaniment in full (which is a more complex matter), they could write chord symbols so that there is at least a guide to the intended nature of the accompaniment. It must be stressed, however, that a song presented with just the words and a few chord symbols does not constitute an adequate form of notation. There were several examples of this, some of which had been given far too high a mark for Notation.

Sets of instrumental parts should not be submitted. Some candidates had sent in the parts in addition to the score, which is unnecessary, while a few candidates submitted only parts, without a score, which is contrary to the Syllabus requirements.

A few candidates submitted graphic scores. In cases when this is the most appropriate method of notation it is, of course, permitted. Graphic scores, however, need to contain a key to the meaning of the symbols used, as well as a clear indication of timings, so that the effectiveness of the score can be measured against the recording.

Recorded Performances

It was good to hear several recordings of live performances, especially those which had been given in front of an audience (which were often followed by a burst of enthusiastic applause). If live performance is not possible, Centres can submit computer-generated performances instead, as many do. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that the synthesised sounds replicate as closely as possible the sonority of real instruments. In the case of a song, it is better if the melody line is reproduced with a vocal sound ('Choir Ahs', for example) than with an instrumental one.

Candidates need to understand the relationship between what they write and what is heard when their pieces are performed. For this reason, they should experience live performances of their pieces whenever possible. Some very successful pieces came from candidates who composed for groups of instruments that they and their classmates could play together.

CDs

Centres are asked to ensure that all CDs submitted will play on a domestic, single-standard CD player. CDs which can only be played through particular computer software (e.g. Windows Media Player or iTunes) must not be submitted. Centres are asked to pay particular attention to this requirement, and to convert the recording format if necessary when recordings are assembled on the CD. DVD recordings should not be submitted.

Recordings should be assembled in candidate number order, with Piece 1 followed by Piece 2 for each candidate. CDs should also have a track listing, provided on a separate piece of paper.

Packaging of Work

There were several cases this year where the CDs had not been adequately protected and where they arrived broken and impossible to play. Although excessively bulky packaging should be avoided if at all possible, it is important that CDs should be wrapped carefully so that they survive the journey through the post.