

MUSIC

Paper 0410/01
Unprepared Listening

General comments

The range of achievement in this paper continues to be very wide, with some candidates gaining very high marks indeed, and others struggling to gain even a few marks. Overall, it was felt that there were few consistently weak areas of knowledge, although the Examiners were surprised at how few candidates answered the question on articulation correctly. The question on texture, as in previous years, revealed problems of understanding from some candidates.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION A

Music A1

- 1 AABA. Well answered.
- 2 Starts with a descending interval, and moves in leaps. A variety of responses.
- 3 They have the same rhythm / they have the same melodic pattern / imitation but progressively higher based around the notes of the tonic triad (ascending sequence was accepted). Most candidates gained at least one mark.
- 4 A harp glissando. Well answered.
- 5 There are generally 2 (or 4) beats in each bar. There is much use of syncopation. In line 4 (and 8 and 16) the strong beat is displaced and the rhythm appears to change to triple time. Many candidates identified the syncopation, but only a very small number could describe the subtle change in the meter. Many answers referred to tempo rather than rhythm.
- 6 Musical. Well answered.
- 7 (a) Twentieth Century / Modern. Well answered.
(b) e.g. use of instrumental effects such as muted trumpets and harp glissando. Use of blue notes. Syncopation and “jazzy” style. Wide range of instruments. Reasonably well answered.

Music A2

- 8 Allegretto. The most common incorrect answer was Adagio.
- 9 Clarinet. Reasonably well answered, although oboe was a frequent wrong answer.
- 10 F major, Perfect. A variety of answers.
- 11 On the first repeat, the melody is an octave lower. The sustained chords have been replaced by repeated quavers / shorter note values in the accompaniment on the horn. The violins play pairs of semiquavers. The bass line is doubled at the octave. On the second repeat, the music is much louder / crescendo and the full orchestra / more instruments play. The melody is doubled in octaves, and there are sustained chords. The bass line now plays on every quaver and is arco, not pizzicato. There is a tremolo, a trumpet “fanfare” and horns / brass play the melody. There were a large number of ways to gain marks on this question, and many candidates answered very well.

- 12 An expanded / large orchestra including trombones, but no extensive percussion. Regular intervals / note lengths. Diatonic harmony. Use of wind instruments as soloists. Melodic material shared between the orchestra. A variety of answers.

SECTION B

Music B1

- 13 Koto / plucked string instrument / guitar-like (the following instruments were accepted: ch'in, pipa, zither, lute, harp, shamisen, guzheng). Well answered.
- 14 Each phrase starts on the same low note. This note is longer than the others. There is then an arpeggio / broken chord, usually ascending, then sometimes descending. There are repeated phrases. Free rhythm / rubato. Most candidates gained at least one of the marks, and many gained full marks.
- 15 Shakuhachi / ryuteki (the following instruments were accepted: dizi / titsu / flute / hsiao / xiao / sujing). Well answered.
- 16 Pentatonic. Well answered.
- 17 Far East / Japan (China was accepted). Well answered.

Music B2

- 18 Trumpet / cornet. A variety of answers, with a common wrong answer being bandoneon.
- 19 First four notes staccato, next two notes slurred. Many candidates failed to answer this question at all; those who did usually identified the staccato correctly, but fewer marked in the slur.
- 20 The melody is doubled in thirds. There are strummed chords on the off-beats / homophonic and a moving bass line. A variety of answers.
- 21 Descending sequence. Reasonably well answered.
- 22 Latin America / South America / Mexico (any geographically appropriate country was accepted). Well answered.

Music B3

- 23 Balafon / marimba / xylophone. Well answered.
- 24 There are ostinato / repeating patterns played by drums and shakers/rattles creating polyrhythms / two against three rhythms. Another balafon plays a repetitive bass line. The instruments enter one by one. Reasonably well answered.
- 25 A solo voice is answered by a group of singers who sing in parallel harmony. Call and response / question and answer. Well answered.
- 26 Africa. Well answered.

SECTION C

Music C1

- 27 G minor. A variety of answers.
- 28 Harpsichord. Reasonably well answered.

- 29 (a)** Bar 8. Not many candidates identified this bar.
- (b)** It is an octave lower. Very few candidates identified this difference.
- 30 (a)** B flat major. A variety of answers.
- (b)** Relative major. A variety of answers.
- 31** The right hand plays broken chords in semiquavers while the left hand plays long notes on beats 1 and 4. The right hand notes sometimes follow / imitate the shape of the flute melody. There were many ways to gain the marks in this question, but few candidates answered well.
- 32** Trill. Well answered.
- 33** Minor third. Reasonably well answered.
- 34** C – B flat – G – A – B flat C – D. Answers varied from completely correct to no attempt to answer. However, it was pleasing that many candidates gained full marks or only made a small number of errors.
- 35** A third. A variety of responses.
- 36 (a)** Baroque. Well answered.
- (b)** Use of harpsichord. Compositional devices such as repetition and sequence. Repeated motif which is extended. Irregular phrase lengths. Imitation between soloist and keyboard instrument. Many ornaments. Well answered – most correct answers referred to the harpsichord and ornamentation.
- 37** Bach. Reasonably well answered.

MUSIC

Paper 0410/02
Prepared Listening

General comments

In general, the questions on world music in **Section D** were well answered. However, candidates must ensure that they listen to the extracts carefully, rather than simply restating facts they have learned – in **Question 41**, for example, almost every candidate stated the same incorrect answer when describing what features of the extract were typically Chinese. The answers in **Section E** were on the whole better than last year, which is pleasing.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION D

Music D1

- 38 Dizi / Hsiao Ti-tzu and Erhu. Most candidates identified the Dizi, but fewer named the Erhu.
- 39 Octave. A variety of answers.
- 40 (a) The same melody is used. Reasonably well answered.
- (b) It is faster. There are three instruments / more instruments playing from the beginning of the second passage / the plucked string instrument is playing from the beginning of the passage. Reasonably well answered.
- 41 Heterophonic texture. The music is decorated with trills. Variation of the same melodic phrases. Use of pitch bending and glissandos by the plucked string instrument. Almost every candidate stated pentatonic scale here – yet the piece quite clearly started with a complete descending eight-note scale. Most candidates identified the heterophonic texture and many also noted the use of ornaments and / or pitch-bending and glissando.

Music D2

- 42 (a) Dizi / Hsiao / Ti-tzu. Well answered.
- (b) Pitch bending / glissando. Vibrato. Trills. Mordent. Well answered.
- 43 (a) Pipa / Ch'in / Guzheng **or** Yangqin. Well answered.
- (b) The strings are plucked (if Pipa) **or** hammered (if Yangqin). Well answered.
- 44 It starts by playing tremolos. It then plays repeated patterns based on arpeggios. There is a two-note chord at the end of each phrase. After a passage in which it plays repeated chords, it then has a more melodic pattern (credit was given for a description of this pattern). A variety of answers, but most candidates gained some credit.
- 45 The tempo is slow and free at the beginning. There is then a more metrical section. The final section is much faster before the music slows down at the end. Well answered.

Music D3

- 46 Gong kettles / chimes rest on cords which are stretched across a frame / box. They are padded sticks. Most candidates gained some credit.
- 47 Instruments of the gender family play a high melody based on decorations / variations of the nuclear theme / balungan. A variety of answers, but many candidates gained some credit.
- 48 Use of drums to control the tempo. Occasional notes from the interpunctuating instruments / gongs marking the gongan / keteg. Heterophonic texture. Contrasts of timbre and tempo. Saron family play the nuclear theme / balungan. Well answered.

Music D4

- 49 Suling and Rabab. Well answered.
- 50 Most of the instruments play heterophonically in octaves. There are occasional low notes from the interpunctuating gongs which break up the music. Most candidates identified the heterophony, but fewer were able to describe the texture in any more detail to gain further marks.
- 51 It is faster and louder. There are drums playing. There are more instruments and the melody is more highly decorated. There is more variation in dynamics, timbre and tempo. Well answered.

SECTION E**Music E1**

- 52 Clarinet. Well answered.
- 53 (a) C major. Well answered.
- (b) Relative major. Well answered.
- 54 (a) The first three (to six) notes are identical / the first phrase is the same. A variety of answers.
- (b) It is faster / animato. It is now in a major key. It is played by a clarinet. The melody now includes a large leap. The character of the music is more urgent. Many candidates gained at least one mark.
- 55 The music is full of descending arpeggios in triplets. The melody emerges from this texture. The piano sometimes doubles a theme in the orchestra. A variety of answers.
- 56 A major. A variety of answers – often A minor.

Music E2

- 57 (a) At the beginning of the concerto / introduction. Well answered.
- (b) It was in A minor. The piano played full chords rather than octaves. A variety of answers.
- 58 C and A natural. A variety of answers.
- 59 G major. This was usually answered incorrectly – C major was a common error, but many keys were suggested.
- 60 Passionato. Reasonably well answered.
- 61 Many modulations, sometimes to remote keys. Use of sequential passages. Dialogue between soloist and orchestra. Fragmentation and development of themes from the exposition. Most candidates gained at least one mark.

Music E3

- 62 Allegretto / crotchet = 120. Reasonably well answered.
- 63 Ostinato. Well answered.
- 64 E flat major. Well answered.
- 65 Horn. Well answered.
- 66 There is an introduction in bars 1 – 4. The main theme is heard in bars 5 – 12. There is a first episode in bars 13 – 20. The main theme is heard again in bars 21 – 28. A second episode is heard in bars 29 – 38. The main theme is played once more in bars 39 – 46. The music is in Rondo form / ABACA. Well answered.
- 67 A third episode is played by oboes in thirds. Not many correct answers.

Music E4

- 68 The rhythm of quaver-dotted crotchet (or lombardic rhythm / scotch-snap) is used in Hungarian folk music. The use of the dorian mode. The use of the cimbalom. Most candidates gained at least one mark.
- 69 Harmonics. A variety of answers.
- 70 Oboe. Well answered.
- 71 F, C. A variety of answers.
- 72 There is a principal theme followed by a first cadenza. This is followed by a variation of the principal theme followed by a second cadenza. ABA¹B¹. Reasonably well answered.
- 73 Horn. A variety of answers.

MUSIC

Paper 0410/03
Performing

General comments

The coursework presented this year was of a variable standard. At best, there were some excellent solos matched by genuine ensemble opportunities which allowed the candidates to demonstrate the full range of their skills. However, it is disappointing to report that many of the issues raised in last year's report – unsuitable ensembles, over-marking etc. – still remain.

Solos

Most solo performances were adequately matched to the candidates' abilities, allowing them to demonstrate a range of musical and technical skills. However, there were again examples of pieces for drum-kit or bass guitar which demonstrated only a very narrow range of skills; this is perfectly acceptable if it reflects the ability of the candidate – but Centres frequently mark these pieces very highly. There was also a large number of vocal solos this year, often in show or popular styles, in which the candidate's technical ability was very limited. Again, Centres must be realistic in their marking – if a vocalist has had very little vocal tuition, is it really correct to be awarding them high marks for technical control?

Ensembles

Once again there were some examples of excellent ensemble opportunities given by Centres to their candidates, who played music in either its original form or in arrangements created with great care by their teachers. However, it is also necessary to comment that some Centres are still ignoring the advice about ensembles given in this report each year. There are still many instances where candidates who have demonstrated impressive instrumental or vocal skills in the solo section performed ensemble music which was either so undemanding, or in some cases not an ensemble at all, that they failed to demonstrate their true ability.

It is unfortunately necessary to repeat exactly last year's advice with regard to ensemble repertoire:

A number of pieces submitted as ensemble performances were in fact solos, and the Moderators were forced to significantly reduce these candidates' marks. An ensemble performance should normally consist of three or more live performers; the candidate's part should not be consistently doubled, and the candidate should demonstrate true ensemble skills with the other players. A general rule of thumb is if the candidate's part could be described as a solo, then it is unlikely to qualify as an ensemble. For instance, some candidates played or sang pieces accompanied by two instruments (for instance piano and drums, or piano and bass), but they were still clearly performing as a soloist; in pieces like this, the accompanying instruments respond to the needs of the soloist, whereas in a true ensemble all the performers will be interacting with each other. Another problem was vocal "duets" in popular or show styles which actually consisted of the singers singing in alternation – never together – and therefore demonstrating no ensemble skills. Exceptions to the need for at least three instruments include acting as an accompanist (e.g. on the piano, accompanying another instrumentalist or singer) and piano duets. **If there is any doubt about the suitability of a piece, then please contact CIE who will be more than happy to provide guidance.**

It is also necessary to remind some Centres once again 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) is provided by the Centre.

Assessment

Although many Centres marked the coursework realistically and accurately, it is disappointing that the increase in lenient marking noted last year was even more evident this year. There were many Centres where the Moderators had to make substantial reductions to the number of marks awarded. Centres must re-familiarise themselves with the distance training materials, as these provide the benchmark standard for this component. Again, Centres are reminded that 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. For example, they may play the notes accurately for two minutes of music, but they have not demonstrated that they have the ability to do so for a further two minutes.

As in previous years, some Centres included very useful comments supporting the marks awarded in the space provided on the working marksheet. All Centres are asked to do this: it not only helps the Moderator, but also focuses the assessor on the skills that have been demonstrated, and should lead to more objective marking.

Although it is mentioned almost every year in this report, there are still some Centres which persist in using half marks; please only use whole numbers.

Presentation of coursework

Most Centres now submit performances on CD, which is very welcome. However, it is vital that Centres check the final version of the tape/CD they submit: once again this year, some CDs didn't work at all, some were incomplete, and some CDs had not been finalised properly, meaning that they could only be played on a computer, not a proper stereo. Please could all Centres listen to the CD before it is submitted so that these problems can be avoided in the future. Cassette tapes are a perfectly valid format, but the Moderators encountered some tapes with very low recording quality this year, which made some of the moderating difficult.

There were again many Centres who submitted the coursework without any accompanying 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. It is extremely difficult to moderate ensemble performances in particular when there is no sheet music to clearly show the candidates' part.

Centres are reminded that the performing and composing coursework must be sent in separate packages, and that a separate recording is needed for each.

MUSIC

Paper 0410/04
Composing

General comments

The compositions submitted by this year's candidates were as varied as ever. The quality of the work was also very variable, although the general standard was rather better than last year.

There were some outstandingly good compositions from candidates who had evidently been taught consistently well throughout the course. At the opposite end of the spectrum, some candidates still appeared to have been left to their own devices to an unacceptable extent.

Assessment

Although most Centres were generally consistent in their internal marking, there was a marked increase in the number of Centres where the rank order of candidates was demonstrably incorrect. Internal marks were often very lenient indeed, across all the assessment criteria. A large number of Centres had continued to use holistic adjustments, but none had used them correctly.

All teacher/assessors should consult the Coursework Training Handbook from time to time, even if they are not new to the system and have been marking candidates' work for some considerable time. The examples in the Pack, taken in conjunction with the descriptors in the Assessment Criteria, could help to avoid some of the extremes of lenient marking. Copies of the Coursework Training Handbook may be obtained from CIE.

Computer Programs and Digital Sources

Several candidates presented pieces that had been composed using Cakewalk, Cubase, Logic or other similar programs. Such compositions often incorporated downloaded samples as a significant part of their thematic content, but none of the candidates concerned had listed the source of these samples. Candidates must not be given credit for any ideas that are not their own. This applies to digital sources just as much as it does to copying from conventionally published scores.

Digitally produced compositions present a particular difficulty in the production of a score. Several candidates simply printed screenshots from the computer, but on their own these are of little use. In such cases, a written account of the composing process, explaining the decisions taken in the course of creating the music, is needed in addition.

A few candidates had used preset accompaniments of the kind found on some electronic keyboards as the basis for their compositions. This greatly restricts the candidates' scope for using their aural imagination, and is highly undesirable.

Scores

There was a marked increase in the number of scores produced using computer notation programs such as Finale, Sibelius or other less sophisticated packages. Many of these looked very impressive and had received full marks. However, closer inspection often revealed serious shortcomings in terms of the correct grouping of notes and/or rests, the correct grouping and beaming of quavers and semiquavers, the correct use of enharmonic equivalents, and other editorial matters. Candidates who use such programs still need to learn how to apply the basic rules of music theory, which other candidates demonstrate through handwritten scores.

A number of Centres submitted scores that were incomplete or gave marks for scores that were not submitted. Marks for Score Presentation/Notation cannot be accepted in the absence of a score, since the Moderators need evidence to prove that the score exists.

Performances and Recordings

There were very few recordings of live performances this year – there was a noticeable increase in the number of sequenced recordings taken directly from the computer notation. Although this is undoubtedly easier and quicker than rehearsing and recording a live performance, it is always much less satisfactory. Candidates should be encouraged to think of a rehearsal with live performers as an integral part of the learning process, so that they can begin to judge whether what they have written is feasible in practice. All sorts of mistakes can then be avoided. Among the most common this year were the following:

- instrumental parts which went beyond the range of the instruments;
- vocal lines which had too wide a range or an impractical tessitura;
- piano parts which were far too fast for human fingers, or which included chords with an impossible number of notes;
- inappropriate combinations of instruments, resulting in severe problems of balance.

Some Centres did not submit recordings of all their candidates' compositions. Some recordings were incomplete, or recorded at such a low level that they were difficult or impossible to hear.

Some recordings appeared to have been made by placing a microphone in front of a set of loudspeakers. These recordings had so much background noise that it was almost impossible to listen to the music.

Some Centres did not observe the current instructions about the format of CD recordings. CDs must be playable on standard domestic hi-fi equipment, so Centres are asked to ensure that they use **CD-R** format only, and do not submit recordings on CD-RW. Centres are specifically asked *not* to submit recordings that can only be played on a computer using Windows Media Player or similar programs, since the Moderators do not necessarily have access to the same software that was used in the production of the CD. Similarly, MIDI, .WAV, .SIB, and .MUS files should not be submitted.

Administration

There was a marked decline in the quality of administration this year. The most common problems included:

- incorrect addition of marks;
- incorrect transcription of marks from the Working Mark Sheet to the Mark Summary Form and to the MS1;
- inadequate identification of which piece had been given which mark;
- inconsistent use of titles for compositions (typically, a different title used on the score and on the recording);
- use of holistic adjustments for inappropriate reasons (or for no apparent reason at all);
- dispatch of Composing and Performing coursework to the same Moderator.
- omission of important documentation (e.g. no individual Working Mark Sheets, no Moderator's copy of the MS1).

2009: Reminder to Centres

Centres are reminded that the syllabus requirements for the Composing Component change next year. Teachers should ensure that they have noted these changes – particularly the reduction in the number of compositions required.