

## **Reports on the Units**

---

**January 2010**

**H142/H542/R/10J**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

© OCR 2010

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications  
PO Box 5050  
Annesley  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622  
Facsimile: 01223 552610  
E-mail: [publications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:publications@ocr.org.uk)

## CONTENTS

**Advanced GCE Music H542**

**Advanced Subsidiary GCE Music H142**

### REPORTS ON THE UNITS

<b>Unit/Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
Chief Examiner's Report	1
G353 Introduction to Historical Study in Music	2
G356 Historical and Analytical Studies in Music	9
Grade Thresholds	13

# Chief Examiner's Report

## General Comments

The first assessment of the new A2 Unit, G356: Historical and Analytical Studies in Music, took place this series and feedback from candidate performance in this unit should provide useful advice for centres and for candidates preparing to sit the unit in the June series.

At AS level the vast majority of candidates were re-sitting the unit in order to improve on their performance in the June 2009 series, and the sequence of prescribed repertoire for this unit helps to make this sitting a valuable opportunity for those who perform below expectations in the previous summer series.

At AS level there were no significant problems with the paper. Examiners are very pleased that candidates are responding so well to the new question format that requires them to focus on comparative listening in relation to two contrasting performances of an excerpt from one of the items of prescribed orchestral repertoire. Raised levels of performance in this area have helped to avoid the downward trend of marks that frequently characterised candidate performance in Section B of the equivalent legacy unit.

More worrying for examiners is the discrepancy in performance within Section B of the unit across particular centres. Candidate answers frequently suggest that one area of the prescribed repertoire has been explored in intricate detail while the remaining area appears to have been investigated hardly at all. In such cases it is the prescribed orchestral repertoire that tends to be known in detail with the jazz recordings studied in a cursory manner. Such uneven approaches by centres to the study of important prescribed repertoire can damage seriously candidates' chances of gaining the highest grades in this unit.

The Principal Examiner's comments below on the first scripts for the A2 Unit G356 will provide useful guidance for those centres wishing to set the January paper as a valuable "mock" paper for the first large cohort of candidates in June this year. The report contains several Teachers' Tips that are worth noting in the important final full term of preparation for the summer examination, and it also gives helpful and specific feedback concerning the ways in which this session's candidates approached individual essay questions in Section B. It is worth reminding candidates that coherent expression of knowledge and understanding through the medium of the written essay is the prime means of communication in this unit, and candidates should be offered plenty of opportunity across the course to formulate, organise and structure their response to music studied. In this age of modern technology, many candidates will be used to producing essays at a computer. While this can be valuable, it is important that candidates sitting Unit G356 gain experience in writing at length with pen and paper and working to a strict time limit prior to the examination itself.

The A2 examination is about more than basic knowledge and learning: *depth of understanding* is a defining feature of the work that is placed in the upper mark ranges. The report on Unit G356 makes it clear that although candidates could demonstrate a degree of musical knowledge, many were much less secure in terms of being able to *apply* their knowledge and reveal clear understanding in relation to the demands of a particular question. As always, examiners expect to see evidence of first-hand familiarity with relevant repertoire, but at A2 secure knowledge of the music is very much a prerequisite: candidates are expected to be able to employ their knowledge of the music in a variety of ways in order to be able to demonstrate a depth of understanding appropriate to full Advanced-level standard. Demonstration of this ability on a consistent basis will be a distinctive hallmark of work that exemplifies the new A\* standard at GCE.

## G353 Introduction to Historical Study in Music

### General Comments

The majority of candidates in this session achieved marks in the middle to high ranges, although there were a few candidates for whom the standard of the unit appeared far too demanding. In general, there appeared to be fewer weaker candidates for this sitting in comparison with the normal January cohort for the equivalent Unit (2552) in the OCR legacy AS Music specification.

Examiners were pleased to note that there were many centres that produced consistently overall marks for the entire entry, suggesting diligent and effective preparation for the unit.

Relatively few candidates erroneously attempted both options in **Section A** of the unit, and this is a welcome sign. While many questions were answered well, too many candidates are disadvantaged by a lack of knowledge of basic music terminology that should have been acquired at GCSE level. Many scripts suggest that some candidates had an unclear notion of the meaning of terms such as "structure", "texture" and "scoring".

Examiners were pleased to note that the improvement in **Section B** answers (noted in the report on the June 2009 session) was maintained, especially in the questions requiring comparison of the two recordings of **Extract 2**.

Examiners wish to remind centres and candidates to ensure that the Insert and any additional writing paper are tagged to the main question paper in a secure manner. In every session some scripts are submitted without the Insert attached, and chasing missing Inserts significantly delays the marking of candidates' scripts.

The order of papers tagged should follow the sequence **question paper + additional writing paper** (if used) + **Insert**. This is the most helpful sequence for examiners, who are frequently inconvenienced by the amount of time spent removing Inserts tagged within the main question paper.

### Teachers' Tips for the Unit

- **Encourage candidates to spend the 15 minutes' preparation time listening attentively to the music recorded on the CD. Useful preparatory comparison of the two recordings of Extract 2 can be carried out during this valuable time before the writing begins.**
- **Prepare all THREE prescribed orchestral works and all THREE jazz recordings. A gambling technique in this area is not advisable and can have disastrous consequences for candidates.**
- **Ensure that candidates engage with the prescribed repertoire at an appropriate level of depth. Many candidates suffer from a superficial grasp of surface details in the music. The most successful answers suggest that candidates can draw on relevant detail from the music, and also know the repertoire thoroughly as a result of repeated, consistent and attentive listening.**
- **Help candidates to appreciate the meaning of key musical terms such as "texture," "tonality" and "instrumentation". This can help to prevent a loss of focus in candidates' answers to questions in the paper.**
- **Remind candidates that they should answer questions on EITHER Extract 1A OR Extract 1B, but not both!**
- **Consider setting a full "mock" examination of a full paper before the unit is set. This can be a useful means of identifying problems in terms of time management and specification infringement BEFORE the examination proper.**

## Comments on Individual Questions

### Section A

**Extract 1A** HAYDN, *Symphony no, 103 ("Drum Roll")*, *Hob.I:103*, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bars 26<sup>2</sup>-50<sup>2</sup>, & 134<sup>2</sup>-160<sup>1</sup>. Collegium Musicum 90 / Richard Hickox (2000), Chandos Records Ltd., CHAN 0655, track 2, 01'56"- 03'36, & 07'43"- 08'36" [Total length of recorded extracts: 02'33"]

- 1) Most candidates were able to identify the binary structure of the extract, but the 3-mark total for this question should have flagged that examiners were expecting more detail for award of full marks. The most perceptive candidates referred to relevant aspects such as the longer "B" section or the return of the opening "A" melody towards the end of the "B" section (at bar 16<sup>3</sup>).
- 2) Most candidates identified modulation to the dominant (G major).
- 3) Examiners were disappointed that many candidates chose "sequence" or "ostinato" as answers to this question, missing the aural effect of antiphony in the extract. As always in this unit, the emphasis is on listening as the primary skill that should be employed.
- 4) Most candidates answered this question accurately, although the respective placing of chords **IV** and **IVb** caused problems for some candidates. Once again, careful listening to the bass line at this point would have enabled candidates to differentiate the two chords effectively.
- 5) Almost all candidates managed to produce an effective outline of the melodic contour of the violin line. Among the stronger candidates, the most common errors included an incorrect starting note (the printed C<sub>4</sub> semiquaver in the score at the end of bar 14 should have provided a valuable reference point for this) and the inclusion of a G<sup>#</sup> as the second semiquaver of bar 15, followed by a G<sub>4</sub> as the fifth semiquaver of the bar.
- 6) Many candidates received full marks for their answers to this question, and the vast majority of candidates perceived the contour of the bass line accurately. Common errors included an incorrect starting pitch (the leap up of a 6<sup>th</sup> from the previous C<sub>4</sub> printed in the score at bar 20 was a useful reference point here), and the failure to perceive the interval of a falling 3<sup>rd</sup> between the last two quavers of bar 21.
- 7) Most candidates identified the use of a pedal accurately.
- 8) Most candidates recognised the use of *pizzicato* in the string parts, although examiners were disappointed at the number of scripts that gave irrelevant answers such as *sforzando* or *crescendo*. The question made it clear that candidates were being asked about performing techniques, and this phrase in the question should have triggered a range of relevant responses in the minds of candidates.
- 9) This question was not answered well by most candidates. The question made it clear that examiners were expecting comments to be related to aspects of **melody** (e.g. melodic decoration, extension and elaboration) or **structure** (the sequence of events, extension of phrases, repetition of ideas, etc.). Disappointingly, many candidates wrote exclusively about aspects of instrumentation, for which no credit could be given.
- 10) Candidates fared better in this question, with most answers able to receive some credit for mentioning relevant details of instrumentation. The best answers revealed evidence of careful listening and an ability to make effective comparison of the aural effectiveness of the extracts across a range of instrumental detail. Some answers were restricted as a result of referring to **Passage 1ii** only, inhibiting the demonstration of clear comparisons between the two extracts.

- Extract 1B**      **JEROME MOROSS, *Wagon Train – Main Theme* (no score available), City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra / Paul Bateman (1999), Silva Screen Records Ltd. FILMXCD 315, disk 2, track 15, 00'01" - 01'11", 01'14" – 02'31" & 02'32" - 03'07" [Total length of recorded extracts: 03'02"]**
- 11) Most candidates identified the basic structure of the extract as ternary form, although the 3-mark total for this question should have made it clear that examiners were looking for more detail for the award melody of full marks. The most obvious additional comments related to either the shorter “B” section (four bars, as opposed to the 8-bar “A” sections) or the element of melodic repetition within the “A” sections.
- 12) Although examiners saw some completely accurate answers to this question, many candidates had not appreciated the overall contour of the bass line, especially in bar 11. Candidates are encouraged to make use of the evidence available to them in the printed score to help suggests possibilities for the missing bass line. In this case, careful consideration of the underlying harmonic potential of the printed melody should have guided candidates toward a basic outline for the bass part.
- 13) Most candidates were able to identify the use of pedal in the bass line, although a significant number of scripts gave “sequence” as an answer. Careful and attentive listening would have avoided such an error.
- 14) Examiners were concerned that many candidates appeared to assume that any music chosen for examination **must** modulate to the dominant key. This was not the case here, and only perceptive listeners secured credit by identifying a move to the **subdominant** key of C major.
- 15) This was answered well by most candidates, with many identifying all five instruments accurately. The most common misperceptions included identification of a flute rather than a **piccolo** (bars 21-27), failure to differentiate between “violins” and the **solo** violin (bars 33-41), and the suggestion that the melody was played by a trumpet rather than a **french horn** (bars 41-43). At GCE, this degree of instrumental discrimination will be expected from candidates in their listening. Examiners did not expect candidates to be able to discriminate between the sound of an oboe and the cor anglais that was performing the melody at bars 29-33.
- 16) Most candidates identified *tremolando* as the performing technique used by the strings in the extract, but examiners were exasperated by the large number of scripts that offered *pizzicato* as a plausible answer to this question.
- 17) This question was not well answered, with too many candidates simply not addressing the aspect of texture. The best answers were able to identify relevant aural features across a range of texture (for example, doubling of a melody line at an octave below and at the distance of a 3<sup>rd</sup> or a 10<sup>th</sup>, contrasts between detached and sustained chords in the accompaniment and the lack of a low bass line), whereas weaker answers were rarely able to refer to aspects of texture beyond the existence of a basic melody plus accompaniment.
- 18) Most answers identified the presence of a pedal note, although not all candidates perceived the tonic pitch accurately.
- 19) This question was answered well, with almost all candidates appreciating a slowing down of the pulse towards the end of **Passage 1iii**. The most popular answers were *ritardando* and *rallentando*, but examiners credited any valid alternative or an accurate description of this rhythmic effect.

- 20) Most answers produced an outline of the melodic contour but many candidates did not appear to make use of the printed pitches at either side of the missing melody in order to ensure that the pitches they wrote dovetailed accurately with the printed score. Most common errors included an incorrect starting note (usually a low D rather than a G) and a failure to appreciate where the gaps of rising and/or falling thirds were positioned within the line.
- 21) Many candidates failed to appreciate the focus of this question. **Scoring** refers to the way in which music is apportioned to specific instruments, instrumental groups and timbres. Weaker answers attempted to analyse the final chord in simple harmonic terms, but the best answers referred to relevant aspects of the instrumental sound of the final sustained chords. The most popular features cited by candidates included reference to the timpani roll and the harp *glissandi* (although too many candidates referred to the latter as arpeggios, demonstrating inaccurate understanding).

#### Teachers' Tips for Section A

- **DO NOT restrict candidates by limiting their range of experience to either “classical” or “contemporary” extracts. An ability to engage with both styles of music will give candidates a wider choice of question in the actual paper.**
- **Provide candidates with opportunities to work through previous papers prior to sitting the examination. The experience will help them to develop valuable answering techniques, and careful discussion of candidate answers against published mark schemes will help both teachers and candidates to develop a clear awareness of the qualities that characterise answers that are likely to gain high marks.**
- **Listening papers from the OCR legacy Unit 2552 can serve as valuable practice documents for Section A. The layout and style of questioning mirrors exactly that of Unit G353. The only difference is that in 2552 papers Section A is marked out of a total of 35, whereas in G353 Section A is marked out of a total of 30.**

## Section B

**Extract 2** MOZART, *Concerto for clarinet and orchestra in A, K 622*, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, bars 57 to 97<sup>1</sup>.

**Extract 2A:** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra / Alfred Prinz / Karl Böhm (1974), Deutsche Grammophon 429 826-2, track 3, 01'30" – 02'35" [Length of extract: 01'05"]

**Extract 2B:** English Chamber Orchestra / Thea King / Jeffrey Tate (1985), Hyperion CDA66199, track 3, 01'26" – 02'28" [Length of extract: 01'02"]

- 22) Most candidates were able to answer all parts of this question accurately; the terms and symbols were well known.
- 23) Many candidates produced completely accurate answers to this transcription question, although examiners were concerned that so many answers notated the final quaver of bar 2 as F $\flat$  rather than E $\sharp$ , betraying a lack of understanding of the harmonic function of this particular note.
- 24) Examiners were disappointed that many candidates failed to answer both parts of this question accurately. The information needed to arrive at the correct answer was printed clearly in the score, and careful listening to the relevant passages in the recordings provided should have made the key centres clear.
- 25) Most candidates were able to refer to at least some aspect of Mozart's writing for the clarinet in the printed extract. The best answers were able to identify a wide range of instrumental writing and produce specific supporting references from the score.
- 26) Examiners have been pleased to note that most candidates are responding well to this new type of question and are showing an increased ability to focus on relevant listening detail when comparing different performances of the same music. Many answers had perceived correctly that **Extract 2B** was performed on a basset clarinet, and many answers referred accurately to passages in the music where the line went below the printed score designed for a conventional clarinet. More perceptive listeners were able to refer to more subtle points of detail in comparing the passages: for example, the more forward clarinet placing in **Extract 2B**, the richer orchestral accompaniment in **Extract 2A**, and the reduced amount of string vibrato evident in **Extract 2B**.  
Examiners would encourage candidates to think carefully about blanket statements made when comparing recordings: **Extract 2B** was performed on an older instrument, but was, in fact, a more modern "period" recording (1985) placed against a conventional "classical" recording from 1974 with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (**Extract 2A**). Some understanding of the revival of period performance since the late 1900s would be helpful preparation for this type of question, and it would also help increase candidates' contextual awareness for **Section C** of the unit.
- 27) Most papers for this unit contain at least one question requiring candidates to relate a section of music to the prescribed repertoire from which it is taken. In order to be able to do this, candidates must know the music well as a result of repeated attentive listening. Examiners were surprised that relatively few candidates were able to gain full marks in this question, especially when the music that followed the printed extract contained several distinctive features within the movement as a whole, notably the use of prominent dominant pedals in the horns and bass, *sf* accents on chromatic chords, and antiphonal exchanges between soloist and orchestra.
- 28) This question was answered well by most candidates.

### Extract 3

- 29) (a) Most candidates were able to identify the trumpet accurately.  
(b) Several candidates chose to hedge their bets in this question and offered several answers. Examiners awarded credit for “pitch bending” only.  
(c) Almost all candidates were aware that the trumpet employed a mute in the recorded extract, although some candidates failed to identify the type of mute (cup or plunger) accurately.
- 30) (a) Most candidates mentioned the use of detached chords, and many referred to the rapid movement on the beat in the bass, following a four-to-the-bar pattern. Informed candidates also mentioned the rising two-note figure in the trombone, and although many candidates referred to the presence of percussion relatively few answers referred to the aurally evident use of wire brushes on the snare.  
(b) Many candidates recognised that the previous detached chords had been replaced by sustained chords in the reeds. Examiners also credited references to the absence of trombones in the second part of the extract.
- 30) (c) Surprisingly few candidates were able to refer to the title of the Basie standard *Lester Leaps In*, although many knew that the theme referred to the soloist about to take centre stage, and a number of answers referred to the theme cutting in at the end of the trumpet solo.
- 31) This question was answered well, with most candidates appreciating that Lester Young’s tenor saxophone solo followed the recorded extract.
- 32) As in June, examiners were disappointed that the range of dates submitted in answer to this question covered a span of several hundred years. Fortunately, the vast majority of answers were within a decade of the correct year of 1938.

#### **Teachers’ Tips for Section B**

- Study of the prescribed repertoire should be a **regular** part of preparation for the unit. It is important that candidates get to know the music **thoroughly**.
- Ensure that candidates can find their way around scores, especially in the early stages of the AS course. It is important that candidates gain confidence in handling the printed scores of prescribed orchestral repertoire.
- Enable candidates to listen to the prescribed works as regularly as possible: candidates need to appreciate the music as **sound**, not just as notes on the page.
- DO NOT leave preparation of the prescribed repertoire until the last minute; this will not help candidates to become thoroughly familiar with the music they need to study.
- DO NOT forget that the prescribed repertoire changes regularly. Consult the OCR website for the prescribed repertoire relevant to any particular session of this unit. **In the study of jazz repertoire, centres and candidates must ensure that they use the recordings prescribed by OCR. If centres are in any doubt about a recording they are using, clarification should be sought from OCR.**
- DO NOT gamble on any particular rotation of prescribed repertoire: all SIX items (three “classical” **and** three jazz) of prescribed repertoire should be studied for any particular session if candidates are not to be disadvantaged.

- Section C** Answers in this section of the unit ranged evenly across the three questions, although Questions **33** (Bach/Davis) and **35** (Morton/Davis) proved most popular with candidates. Examiners look for an awareness of the contextual background to the prescribed repertoire studied in preparation for the unit, and they expect candidates to be able to support their knowledge and understanding with appropriate evidence. In the highest mark bands answers are expected to be consistently relevant, demonstrating thorough and detailed knowledge, while at a lower level of achievement, the writing must provide evidence of at least basic understanding of context together with some accurate supporting references in order to achieve a standard appropriate to AS level.
- 33)** Most candidates were able to make good general points about the natural trumpet and the modern valved version. The best answers were able to go beyond this basic awareness to relate learning clearly to the music of Bach and Davis, and to support their knowledge with clear evidence from the repertoire studied over the course. General observations were well made, but the supporting detail from relevant repertoire was often lacking or rather superficial in nature. Some essays lacked appropriate focus as a result of writing about the contribution of the saxophone in *So What*.
- 34)** This question was the least popular choice this session, although many candidates who attempted this question were able to demonstrate an encouraging degree of familiarity with Schubert's use of the orchestra. The best answers were able to demonstrate clear awareness of the ways in which relevant detail from the prescribed orchestral score reflected its musical and historical context, while weaker essays frequently represented little more than a section-by-section description of the music contained in the first movement of Schubert's symphony.
- 35)** This was a popular question, and many candidates demonstrated a clear awareness of the ways in which recording technology advanced in the period between 1926 and 1959. The best answers were able to refer in detail to aspects of band layout (front line and rhythm section / individual microphones and engineer balance), but many candidates remain confused regarding appropriate terminology relating to recording medium: too many candidates believed that *So What* was issued on a CD, while others claimed that Jelly Roll Morton's original recordings were circulated on vinyl disks. This degree of confusion in candidates' answers often restricts the amount of credit examiners can award: for an essay to achieve a mark into double figures, the knowledge and understanding demonstrated must not reveal any significant degree of confusion.

#### Teachers' Tips for Section C

- Give AS candidates several opportunities to organise their ideas in practice essays before the examination itself. This is helpful preparation for this section of the unit and will point out issues that may need to be addressed before the real examination (e.g. allocation of time, overall essay structure and a focus on the relevance of information provided).
- Encourage candidates to focus their writing in order to answer a specific question rather than simply regurgitate knowledge that they have acquired: many able candidates fail to gain marks in Section C because their writing is not consistently applied to the demands of the question set by the examiners.

... and remember:

**LISTENING attentively is the key to success.** It is important not to let the sound simply wash over candidates. In an A-level Music course, examiners expect candidates to be able to delve beneath the obvious surface features of music they encounter. Intelligent and attentive background listening can be of enormous help to candidates in developing a sense of context for this section of the unit and in broadening and deepening their musical understanding.

## G356 Historical and Analytical Studies in Music

### General Comments

This was the first assessment series for Unit G356, presumably used as a 'pre-sit' by the small cohort of candidates. As might be expected from a small first entry, there were few outstanding scripts, but most candidates were able to demonstrate a range of understanding and musical experience in their answers.

**Section A** produced some good answers to questions based around the Area of Study: *Interpretation*, but questions involving *Tonality* were generally poorly answered by all but the very best candidates. The open format of the questions appeared to settle the candidates down quickly and the three differing carols afforded variety and ample opportunity for comparison. This section now consists only of the vocal extract and this, together with the longer (fifteen minute) preparation time at the start of the examination, should enable candidates to focus their efforts more closely on the specific questions.

### Teachers' Tips for Section A

DO offer candidates plenty of opportunities to respond to a range of unfamiliar examples of accompanied vocal music written between 1900 and 1945. They need to develop the ability to comment on both Areas of Study: *Interpretation* and *Tonality*.

DO encourage candidates to develop skills in relating **sound** to **symbol** to improve their understanding of tonality. Too many candidates in this series appeared to clutch at straws by listing all the accidentals they could **see** in a passage, rather than by **listening** to the music and appreciating the link between the two.

DO encourage candidates to use the fifteen minutes' preparation time at the start of the examination constructively. This extended listening period (with access to the score insert and questions) should be seen as a valuable time to focus on the aural nature of the extract, its lyrics and its structure before candidates begin to answer the questions.

DO encourage candidates to organise their thoughts in bullet point form in Section A. Marks are awarded for key facts in response to the question, not for woolly rambles covering everything that is happening in a passage.

**Section B** has a different format from the previous legacy specification, with topics being genre-based rather than being a snapshot in time. Examiners were pleased to see that all topics, with the exception of *Song*, were tackled by candidates in this first assessment. It was apparent that candidates had studied the prescribed repertoire in some depth and were able to discuss the music with some degree of success, though few were able to apply their knowledge to answering the specific questions. Study of the related repertoire was more variable. In the short time available for candidates' study prior to the January session, this was, perhaps, predictable, but it was sometimes evident that little attentive listening had gone on, with scripts regurgitating a popular textbook virtually verbatim.

### Teachers' Tips for Section B

DO study extended sections of the Prescribed Repertoire. Answers which dip in and out of scenes and movements are rarely successful. At this level, candidates should have carried out rigorous and thorough appraisal of the music.

DO encourage candidates to listen attentively to the Prescribed Repertoire on a regular basis. Close familiarity with the music is the key to success.

DO ensure that related repertoire is covered in enough detail for candidates to be able to make worthwhile comparisons. Again, detailed listening is essential.

DO ensure candidates practise hand writing their essays. The ability to write legibly at speed with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar is essential if candidates are to communicate their thoughts clearly.

DO encourage candidates to read and digest the question and to plan a relevant answer.

Essays cannot access the top two bands of marks if the whole question is not answered directly.

### Comments on Individual Questions

#### Section A

- Q.1(a)** Virtually all candidates accessed some marks in this question, although few scored full marks. The basic shape of the melody was usually noted, along with the change in dynamics and the C major triad. Fewer candidates were able to identify the modality and the change of tonal centre, and a number claimed that the music was 'totally atonal'. One of two alluded to the rhythmic augmentation, although this precise phrase was never used. There was some misunderstanding of the term *melisma*, with candidates suggesting that the tie (e.g. in bar 10) rendered the vocal line melismatic.
- Q.1(b)** This was quite well done, with the ostinato and spread chords usually identified, though not always by name. The shadowing of the voice by the harp part was often commented upon, but references to tonality were not common.
- Q.2(a)** This offered an opportunity for almost all candidates to gain credit. Many commented on the dynamics and the use of solo voice. Surprisingly few were able to explain, or even notice, the F sharp minor/major alternation or the cross rhythm effect.
- Q.2(b)** There were a number of good answers here, with some use of appropriate textural terminology. Some candidates were unsure what voice types were involved, even though the trebles were clearly marked in the score. The best scripts identified virtually everything in the mark scheme.
- Q.3** Very few answers here were even adequate. Identification of the key at the start was beyond about half of the candidates, yet the passage began with an anacrusis unison B flat leading to an E flat chord in voices and harp within a three flat key signature. Many seemed to be confused about the meaning of the term *tonality* and gave details of the canonic textures.

*Reports on the Units taken in January 2010*

- Q.4** Most candidates gained at least 5 or 6 marks. Weaker answers were either superficial, simply stating the obvious, or neglected one aspect of the question. Real comparative answers were rare.
- Q.5** A pleasing variety of works was mentioned. Candidates who chose small-scale songs were able to make appropriate comparisons more successfully than those who chose oratorios or operas. It appeared that many of those who wrote about such large works thought that the short extract with which they were familiar was the whole work.

**Section B**

**Topic 1** There were no responses to this topic.

**Topic 2** About half the centres prepared candidates for this topic.

**Q.9** This was a popular question. Most candidates demonstrated some relevant knowledge, though it was evident that many were writing from what they had learnt by reading rather than through genuine familiarity with the musical soundscape of the work.

**Q.10** This was also a popular question. Most candidates were able to give an account of some aspects of the music of *Symphonie fantastique*, but few were able to compare this successfully with a work by another composer. Few were able to address the part of the question requiring detailed reference to at least two contrasting extended passages.

**Q.11** Fewer candidates attempted this, and those who did, chose to discuss the music of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. The other selected composer was usually Couperin. While most demonstrated familiarity with the music of the *Four Seasons*, few were able to comment convincingly on the music of Couperin and there was little evidence of listening, detailed or otherwise.

**Topic 3** Few centres prepared candidates for this topic. It is, therefore, difficult to make general comments on individual questions. Candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of the films, but were less secure in choosing appropriate scenes to answer the specific question in detail. Again, there was a tendency for answers to dart from point to point merely regurgitating all known information.

**Topic 4** Very few candidates attempted this topic. The music of Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices* had been studied in depth and candidates were able to draw some comparisons between the rôle of the chorus in the religious music of Bach and Handel.

*Reports on the Units taken in January 2010*

**Topic 5** A number of candidates prepared this topic.

**Q.18** Most candidates were able to discuss some aspects of the music of *West Side Story*, but few demonstrated an in-depth understanding of two extended passages, and merely set out all that they knew.

**Q.19** Answers on the Wagner part of this question were generally better than those on the comparative Italian composer. Some candidates were completely confused about who had written what, and there was little evidence that they really knew the music.

**Q.20** Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* was discussed alongside a number of works including Blow's *Venus and Adonis*. Candidates were able to discuss some of Purcell's musical techniques, but were less secure about putting this knowledge into context.

**Topic 6** About a quarter of centres prepared candidates for this topic.

**Q.21** There were some detailed answers here, with candidates showing a genuine interest in, and understanding of, the music. Some answers attempted to discuss every track on the album and these were, predictably, less successful and, on the whole, superficial.

**Q.22** Candidates were able to respond in some depth on the music of *The Beatles*, but were able to offer little in terms of appropriate comparison with another British group. Some made no mention of any other group at all and others chose groups of other nationalities.

**Q.23** The music of *Queen* was an obvious choice for this question. Answers were generally superficial, with candidates discussing the lyrics, rather than the effectiveness of the interpretation of the lyrics. Few were able to discuss the songs of a second glam rock band.

# Grade Thresholds

Advanced GCE Music H142/H542  
January 2010 Examination Series

## Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
G353	Raw	90	68	61	54	47	41	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
G356	Raw	90	70	61	53	45	37	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0

## Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H142	300	240	210	180	150	120	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
H142	14.5	40.5	71.0	93.1	99.2	100	131

## 131 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums/index.html>

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**1 Hills Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB1 2EU**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**14 – 19 Qualifications (General)**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
**is a Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Registered in England**  
**Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU**  
**Registered Company Number: 3484466**  
**OCR is an exempt Charity**



**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**Head office**  
**Telephone: 01223 552552**  
**Facsimile: 01223 552553**