

Examiners' Reports

January 2011

HX42/R/11J

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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.

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Chief Examiner's Report

Once again the January sitting of the two written units for GCE Music has proved popular with candidates. An overwhelming majority of entries for the AS unit (**G353**) were candidates re-sitting the unit in an attempt to secure higher grades than they were able to achieve last summer, and the award outcomes indicated that for most of the candidates this had been a successful strategy, especially around the E/U boundary. It is important to remember, however, that in order to improve on a June result, candidates need to perform better at the re-sitting: the standard of the examination in January is exactly the same as that for June.

In both units the key to success is personal familiarity with an appropriate range of music. At AS level the repertoire is defined precisely in the form of three classical scores and three jazz recordings; at A2 level the choice is defined by the Historical Topic chosen, its Prescribed Work and related repertoire (indications of the nature of *related repertoire* are provided for each topic in the specification).

It remains a concern to examiners that some candidates' familiarity with the music frequently appears rather superficial: their answers are able to refer only to basic surface features of the music and there is often little to suggest that there has been deeper exploration of the music, or reflection on aspects such as instrumental sonority, harmony and structure. It is profoundly disappointing that such candidates leave blank spaces in papers where questions require them to draw upon this deeper level of learning and understanding.

The degree of understanding expected in relation to studied repertoire cannot be acquired by irregular or cursory listening undertaken in the few weeks or months before the written examination: the course of exploration, study and listening must be planned to stretch *throughout* the year so that knowledge is consolidated and understanding is deepened as candidates begin to piece together the threads of learning and form a complete understanding of how the music works. This all takes time, and without regular work the required aural and analytical skills will not be developed sufficiently to enable candidates to cope with the demands of the A-level written units under the added pressure of a time limit.

Candidates who know the music well are able to write convincing answers supported by detail derived from first-hand knowledge of the music. This is the type of approach that examiners strongly wish to encourage. Too frequently, however, candidate answers rely significantly on stock words and phrases gleaned from published guides to the subject or from cursory listening to recordings. A-level study is about *depth*, especially at A2, and candidates need to be fully aware of this throughout the duration of the course if they wish to do well in the written units. The Principal Examiner reports that follow this introduction highlight the most significant features of candidate and centre performance in each unit and provide helpful advice on how best to prepare for the specific demands at each level. These comments also identify common errors made by candidates and areas in which key aspects of the subject were either not well understood or misinterpreted by significant numbers of candidates. Careful study of the points made by senior examiners should help to guide teachers and students in their preparation for future series.

G353: Introduction to Historical Study in Music

General Comments

As in previous January sessions, many candidates achieved marks in the middle range, and examiners saw very few scripts that gained a mark above 80. In general, there appeared to be some improvement in candidates' knowledge of prescribed music in **Section B**, although far too often examiners saw candidates demonstrate high levels of general aural perception in **Section A**, only to be let down by a lack of detail and accuracy in their answers in **Section B**. As in previous reports, examiners wish to stress strongly to candidates the need to acquire high levels of familiarity with the prescribed scores and recordings: early investigation and attentive listening in the course will enable firm foundations to be established in this area; hurried study of this material a few weeks before sitting the paper is not a route to success.

Candidates can help examiners by tagging items in the following sequence: **question paper + additional writing paper** (if used) **+ Insert**. This order means that examiners do not have to disentangle the Insert from the middle of the question paper before they can start marking. Sadly, too many candidates still believe that the Insert has to be placed *inside* the question paper. This is the order in which items are packed into secure bags for distribution, but it is not helpful at the marking stage.

Teacher Tips for the Unit

- **Effective use of the preparatory listening time will help candidates to gather important information that they can use to answer questions. Although they cannot write during this period, valuable attentive listening can be carried out, especially in relation to the comparison of recorded performance of Extract 2. It is important that teachers help candidates to structure their use of this listening time effectively, and help them to develop strategies to enable them to focus on appropriate detail in their listening.**
- **Prepare all THREE prescribed orchestral works and all THREE jazz recordings. DO NOT gamble on any particular rotation of prescribed repertoire – it can have disastrous consequences for candidates.**
- **Ensure that candidates acquire an appropriate depth of understanding in relation to the prescribed chords and recordings. Regular attentive listening will be extremely helpful in this area.**
- **Encourage candidates to handle subject-specific terminology accurately, so that terms such as “harmony”, “counterpoint” and “sequence” are well understood and used appropriately in relation to the music heard.**
- **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 complete 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 MOZART, *Piano trio in C, K.548*, 3rd movement, bars 0²-38², & 133²-195. The London Fortepiano Trio (1991), Hyperion CDS44021/3, disk 3, track 3, 00'00"-00'44" & 03'09"-04'25" [Total length of recorded extracts: 02'00"]

- 1) Examiners were expecting candidates to add the staccato and phrase markings (clearly evident in the recording) to the score, but many added dynamic indications and received no marks. The question provides a clear focus for candidates' listening by asking for *articulation* to be added to the printed melody. It was surprising to see so many scripts that added items such as tempo markings and dynamics to the bass line.
- 2) Most candidates identified the imperfect cadence accurately.
- 3) Recognition of the melody taken over by the violin and the addition of a 'cello to the bass line were the most common answers. More perceptive listeners mentioned features such as the piano chords interspersed with rests, or the octave transpositions in the 'cello line.
- 4) Most candidates placed chord **IIb** accurately, although there was often considerable confusion regarding the placing of the remaining three chords. Examiners found this surprising, since the use of a **Ic-V** progression in bar 16 represents a classic harmonic cliché of the style.
- 5) Many answers to this question were entirely correct. Examiners noted with pleasure the improvement in accuracy of candidates' bass line dictation this session, and hope that this trend will continue.
- 6) This question was not answered well, with *passing note* being the most popular answer. Very few candidates were able to identify the note accurately as a lower chromatic appoggiatura. Work undertaken in connection with Western Tonal Harmony exercises for Unit G352 should have aided recognition of the note's specific harmonic function.
- 7) Most candidates recognised the binary structure of the passage, with more detailed responses referring to the decorated repeats of each section. The presence of a new (C) section at the end confused some candidates. Examiners accepted **A¹A²B¹B²C** as a full and accurate description of the structure here.
- 8) Candidates' answers to this question seemed to fall into 'almost correct' or 'hopelessly adrift' categories. One mark is always available for a convincing recognition of the overall contour of the line. Answers did not suggest that candidates had experienced problems dealing with leger lines, but those with the most accurate answers demonstrated an awareness of the underlying harmonic pattern (**V7-I** in C), which gave a vital clue to the successful completion of this answer.
- 9) Many candidates identified double stopping as the correct answer, although examiners saw many incorrect answers (such as *double bowing*) that demonstrated muddled learning of subject-specific terminology.

- 10) The best answers to this question were produced by candidates who were able to describe the textures accurately and locate examples precisely, using bar numbers. Unfortunately, examiners also saw many answers that consisted of entirely irrelevant detail, often failing to refer to any detail of the writing for piano.
- 11) Many candidates were able to refer to some aspect of melodic elaboration here. The best answers were able to demonstrate specific ways in which the opening melodic motif was developed in the passage, although relatively few answers were able to articulate this in more than a very basic manner. Examiners had expected candidates to refer to aspects such as melodic extension, use within arpeggio figuration, and/or in antiphony, supporting observations with references to the skeleton score.
- Extract 1B** **JOHN WILLIAMS, *Schindler's List* – Music from the Original Motion Picture Soundtrack, Boston Symphony Orchestra / John Williams (1993), MCA Records Inc., MCD 110969-2, track 1 (Theme from *Schindler's List*), 00'17" - 01'08", track 10 (Making the List), 02'55" – 03'49" & track 11 (Give me your names), 01'55" - 04'04" [Total length of recorded extracts: 03'54"]**
- 12) Most candidates identified the key as D minor, but examiners saw too many hurried responses of F major, demonstrating very superficial listening. Major/minor differentiation represents an extremely basic level of aural discrimination.
- 13) Many candidates correctly identified the use of *portamento* (the specific playing technique used in the recording), although examiners also allowed credit for *glissando*. The specification requires Advanced-level candidates to be able to use subject-specific terminology accurately, so credit was not awarded for the less precise answer of "slide".
- 14) There were many fully correct answers to this question, and examiners were pleased at the security of most responses, with almost all candidates being able to position at least one of the chords (usually **B^b**) accurately.
- 15) Most candidates identified the use of a flute, although very few candidates suggested the presence of an alto flute or made comment on the low pitch range. Worryingly, there were many answers suggesting instruments such as oboe and clarinet. Accurate aural differentiation in relation to standard orchestral instruments is expected at this level of examination.
- 16) This was answered well by most candidates, with many identifying the use of augmentation.
- 17) Many candidates gave *oboe* as their answer to this question, and although this response was credited, examiners were pleased that a significant number of perceptive listeners revealed acute aural discrimination in identifying the use of a *cor anglais* in the recording.
- 18) Most answers were able to provide a convincing outline of the bass contour in their answer to this question, but very few candidates were able to judge the larger interval leaps in bar 36 with complete accuracy.

- 19) In contrast, this melodic dictation question was answered more securely, with a large number of candidates receiving full marks for their answers. Common slips in “near miss” responses usually involved misjudgement of the falling 4th at the start of bar 43, or the omission of a sharp symbol (#) before the note C on the 3rd beat of bar 44.
- 20) As with **Question 11**, very few answers received marks in the top band (5-6 marks), although most candidates were able to make some accurate observations on at least on musical aspect derived from **Passage 1i**. Most answers, however, lacked the range and detail expected in order to receive a mark in the top band.
- 21) Advanced-level candidates need to be able to engage accurately with at least the basic aspects of harmony and tonality as outlined in the specification. Study of Western Tonal Harmony, carried out in coursework exercises for Unit G352, should be providing candidates with a secure foundation of harmonic knowledge, but there is little evidence that candidates are appreciating the need to draw upon this learning in Unit G353. A distinctive feature of the OCR GCE Music specification is its strong element of integration: the specification planners were very clear in their intention to emphasise the interrelatedness of the three basic disciplines of listening (the primary music activity), composing and performing. Candidates who fail to understand the subtle links between GCE units (and, by implication, the links between all music activities) are effectively penalising themselves. Examiners hope that centres will do all that they can to stress the integration of activities as they plan and deliver the A-level Music course.

In relation to this particular question, many answers failed to even mention aspects of chords or cadences and, even when candidates did refer to features of the harmony, many answers were rather vague and suggested that the harmonic content of the passage had not been appreciated. Some answers mentioned the anticipation of a perfect cadence at bar 49-50 and its interruption by the addition of extended 7th and/or 9th chords towards the end of the passage.

Teacher Tips for Section A

- **Ensure that candidates explore all the features (outlined in the specification) that they are expected to be able to recognise aurally in this section of the paper.**
- **Encourage candidates to practise exercises in both the classical and 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.**
- **Give candidates plenty of opportunities to engage with aspects of harmony and tonality in writing about the music in this section. Encourage them to draw on their learning in relation to the language of Western Tonal Harmony (Unit G352) to provide a foundation of knowledge that can inform answer strategies in Unit G353.**

Section B

Extract 2 MOZART, *Clarinet concerto in A, K 622*, 3rd movement, bars 231 to 254².

Extract 2A: Academy of Ancient Music / Hogwood, Pay (1984), Decca / L'Oiseau-Lyre, 414 339-2 (1985), disk 1, track 3, 05'30" – 06'04" [Length of extract: 00'34"]

Extract 2B: Concentus musicus Wien / Harnoncourt, Meyer (1998), Warner Classics / Teldec Classics / Das Alte Werke 2564 69855-6 (2000), track 9, 05'31" – 06'04" [Length of extract: 00'33"]

- 22) Most candidates were able to answer all parts of this question accurately. Section (a) was allocated two marks, and here the examiners expected candidates to refer to the *sudden* loudness followed by an immediate diminution of volume. In section (b), there were many correct answers (the printed symbol in the score was a clear appoggiatura), but a large number of candidates incorrectly gave *acciaccatura* as an answer.
- 23) Given the very clear clue (harmonic device) provided in the wording of this question, examiners were disappointed that most candidates failed to identify the presence of a dominant pedal in the extract.
- 24) Most candidates appeared well prepared for this transposition question, with many answers receiving full marks. The most common mistakes in those answers that were almost correct involved inaccurate transcription of the chromatic scale in bar 8, with some candidates demonstrating confusion in their use of F^b and G^b to mirror the accidentals in the original clarinet part.
- 25) This question was answered accurately by most candidates.
- 26) Most answers to this question contained superficial detail only, with very few candidates demonstrating sufficiently detailed knowledge to be able to refer in detail relevant features of the relationship between the solo clarinet and the orchestra in the extract.
- 27) The rubrics for this extract (printed immediately before **Question 22**) informed candidates that *both* recordings were performed using basset clarinets, but many candidates continued to insist that **Extract 2A** was performed on a conventional clarinet, while **Extract 2B** made use of a basset clarinet.

The main weakness in answers was a lack of detail: while many candidates were able to compare the recording in a very general manner, relatively few were able to focus on specific detail in composing their answers. Further confusion can also arise when candidates forget to make it clear to which of the extracts they are referring. In general terms, many candidates receive marks in the middle mark bands (3-4 and 5-6 marks) but for a mark in the top band examiners require specific evidence of careful listening used to draw precise comparisons across a range of relevant musical features.

28) Section (a) of this question was answered well by most candidates, with most candidates referring to features such as the return of the main rondo theme in the tonic key, or the use of sudden dynamic contrasts in the music.

Section (b) was less well answered, with many hazy responses, and considerable confusion regarding the overall structure: a large number of candidates believed the movement to be in sonata form rather than rondo form.

Extract 3 **JELLY ROLL MORTON & HIS RED HOT PEPPERS, *Black Bottom Stomp* (1925), from *Jelly Roll Morton & His Red Hot Peppers, Vol.1 – Chicago Days. 1927/1927, EPM Musique (Jazz Archives No.110) 158942 (1997), track 1, 02'29" – 03'06"*. [Length of recorded extract: 00'37"]**

29) (a) Most candidates were familiar with characteristic features of the New Orleans style of polyphonic improvisation.

30) (a) Many candidates gave *drum kit* as their answer to this question, whereas examiners were looking for a more precise reference to the sound of a cymbal (an instrument name which, like the saxophone, is frequently spelled incorrectly by some candidates).

(b) Most candidates referred to the syncopated rhythm played by the cymbal, but the *choke effect* evidently confused many candidates. Examiners did credit valid descriptions of the dampening effect, where the writing demonstrated clear aural perception.

31) (a) The trombone break was usually well described, with many answers referring to aspects such as the high register, syncopated rhythm and/or the rising *glissando*. Perceptive listeners commented on the use of *vibrato*, and a number of answers demonstrated contextual awareness of the tailgate style of playing at this point in the performance.

(b) Most candidates answered this question accurately.

32) In general, descriptions of the second break were less accurate than those of the first (see **Question 31(a)**), with most answers failing to mention important detail and providing vague generalisations. Many of the better answers referred to the use of ascending sequence, and a number of candidates noticed the use of a secondary rag pattern in the rhythm. Examiners credited accurate verbal description of the use made of the rapid three-note motif at the start of the break.

33) Examiners were surprised that many candidates appeared to be confused when describing the musical detail that preceded the recorded extract. Most inaccurate answers described the music that **followed** the recorded extract, indicating a need to read the question carefully. Candidates who knew the music well had little trouble listing the banjo solo and providing at least one further comment (such as the use of clarinet glissando in the high register or slap bass) for the full three marks.

34) Most candidates were aware that the performance was recorded in Chicago, although New York and New Orleans were popular alternative locations.

Teacher Tips for Section B

(A repeated list of observations, but aspects that still require attention from candidates and those responsible for planning and delivering the AS course for this unit)

- **Study of the prescribed repertoire is 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 All questions in this section proved popular with candidates, with perhaps **Question 35** just having the edge in terms of candidate choice.

Most answers received marks within the middle bands: very few answers demonstrated little or no knowledge of context or repertoire, and most answers were able to show at least some knowledge of relevant aspects of the music. In general, most candidates showed a basic knowledge in their writing, but relatively few essays seen this series demonstrated the consistent depth of learning, understanding and perception required to secure a mark in the top band.

35) Most candidates chose to compare the use of the clarinet in Mozart's concerto with Morton's *Black Bottom Stomp*, and there was an awareness of the different roles played by the instrument in each work. Less strong answers were rather hazy in terms of articulating the differences between the two pieces of repertoire, but in the best answers candidates were able to write about specific points in each piece and support their observations with detailed references that reflected a strong degree of aural familiarity with the music.

- 36) Most candidates who attempted this question were able to describe the orchestral forces used by Bach, although many candidates clearly had a confused understanding of key terms such as *basso continuo* and *figured bass* and there were also many unsubstantiated conjectures regarding aspects of performance practice, especially in relation to the use of a harpsichord within the continuo. More informed candidates were able to go further and comment on the usually large size of the brass section, and many also referred to the limitations of the trumpets used by Bach and how this was reflected in the music written for them in the prescribed items from the suite.

Very few candidates explored other ways in which the *Orchestral Suite no.3* reflected the nature of baroque orchestral music, and examiners were disappointed that so few answers commented on features such as the use of imitative counterpoint (the middle-section fugue in the overture) or the use of dance styles (such as the concluding gigue).

- 37) The most popular comparison in this question was between Morton and Davis, and in general candidates who chose to compare Morton and Basie fared less well, finding fewer distinctive differences to draw upon in their writing.

Many answers appreciated the increased recording time available to Davis and considered the musical and stylistic implications of more extended improvisation solos. There was also a good level of awareness of the key changes in style from New Orleans polyphony to the more laid back feel of Davis' 'cool' jazz.

The best answers were able to place the works chosen in a creditable historical context and support their observations with detailed and specific references from the music, but too many candidates digressed to focus exclusively on aspects of recording technology in their writing.

Teacher Tips for Section C

- **Make use of Section C practice 'essays' before the examination itself. This is helpful preparation in terms of organising ideas and consolidating knowledge for this part of the unit, and these exercises will point out issues that may need to be addressed before the examination itself (e.g. allocation of time, overall essay structure and focus on the relevance of information).**
- **Help candidates to develop writing strategies that will enable them to direct their writing in this part of the unit: examiners expect candidates to answer a *specific* question rather than simply reproduce information that they have acquired in class or from a published guide for the unit: 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. Examiners expect candidates at AS level to be able to delve beneath the obvious surface features of the music. Intelligent and attentive background listening can be of enormous help to candidates in developing a sense of context for this section and in broadening and deepening their musical understanding, while also benefitting their studies in Units G351 and G352. Listening is not simply an "add on" to performing and composing: it is a vital part of the integrated A-level Music specification offered by OCR.

G356: Historical and Analytical Studies in Music

General Comments

There was a slightly smaller entry for this unit compared with January 2010. A few candidates were resitting, while most were entering for the first time after only one term of A2 study. There were few outstanding scripts, but most candidates were able to demonstrate some musical knowledge and understanding in their answers. It is evident that centres are becoming more familiar with the requirements of the new Specification and are thus more confident in the preparation of their candidates.

Most candidates completed the paper, but some did not manage their time effectively and spent too long on Section A, thus leaving themselves insufficient time for the essays in Section B. Some candidates only produced one essay, others wrote only very briefly in their second one.

Section A produced some good answers to questions on general aspects of Butterworth's setting, and all candidates demonstrated an ability to engage with the music. However, the majority of candidates were unable to deal confidently with issues of harmony and tonality. Candidates need to develop their aural skills so that, through listening, they are better able to relate sound to symbol. They also need to be mindful of the two Areas of Study, *Interpretation* and *Tonality*, in their preparation for this section of the examination.

For most questions in Section A, marks are awarded for each relevant comment. It is entirely appropriate for candidates to write in bullet-point fashion rather than in extended prose and, indeed, writing in a succinct manner should assist in focusing the candidate's mind on the requirements of the specific question. As in previous sessions, many candidates spent time writing at undue length without reward.

Section B responses included all Topics. The most popular were *Programme Music*, *Music for the Stage* and *Popular Music*.

Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of individual works from the Prescribed Repertoire and some were able to show real engagement with the music. They found more difficulty when asked to compare works, or when they were required to show understanding of music from the related repertoire. Centres need to focus study of their chosen related repertoire to ensure that candidates are able to approach these questions with confidence.

The requirement to discuss *extended sections* from the Prescribed Repertoire caused difficulty for many, with candidates dipping in and out of scenes/movements without concern for this aspect of the question. At this level, candidates should have carried out rigorous and thorough appraisal of extended sections of the music.

A number of candidates took too long to get to the heart of the essay title. Centres are advised to work on both essay and examination technique from the outset of the A2 year. Within the time allowance, candidates cannot afford to spend time on long essay introductions that merely provide a general sense of context. To gain high marks, candidates writing must focus consistently on the appropriate aspect of the topic.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

- Q.1 This was generally quite well answered. The majority of candidates were able to make some link with the bells of the text, though specific details were often lacking. Very few candidates made any reference to the music of the link passage (bar 14 to bar 19). Candidates are reminded to consider the whole passage required by the question.
- Q.2 Most candidates were able correctly to apply terms such as *syllabic*, *strophic* and *diatonic*. Recognition of the key changes, or their significance, was much less assured. Most were able to name the key at the start, but some candidates appeared to be completely unaware of the modulations for each verse, even though the changes of key signature were in the score.
- Q.3 Candidates were confident with straightforward comments on tempo or dynamics and most referred to the single tolling bell. Only a small number of candidates noted that the opening of the vocal melody was the same as in previous verses, but most observed the change to a chordal accompaniment, though they were rarely able to be more precise about its harmonic structure. The tritone in the bass line passed unnoticed.
- Q.4(a) Many candidates gained full marks here, though few understood the meaning of *a piacere*.
- Q.4(b) A substantial minority referred to the reappearance of motifs from earlier in the song and it was pleasing to note that a number of candidates were able to recognise the use of the whole tone scale. Most others thought the passage was minor. A number of candidates wasted time writing about bar 117 to bar 121, which were outside the remit of this question. Candidates are reminded that they may write on the Insert and marking the bars referred to in each question would prevent this sort of occurrence.
- Q.5 This was well answered, with most candidates able to make appropriate comments on the performers' interpretation of the score. As in previous sessions, some candidates merely repeated instructions present in the score.
- Q.6 This was quite well answered by those candidates who were able to select an appropriate song for discussion, though comparisons were rather superficial. Others left this question blank. Other issues included discussions of repertoire which was just outside the period (at either end), and candidates who failed to identify their chosen song or wrote generally about entire song cycles. Specific details are needed if full marks are to be achieved.

Section B

Topic 1

- Q.7 Candidates demonstrated some understanding of Schumann's writing, but were not always able to support their knowledge with detailed, specific examples from the music.
- Q.8 Candidates were able to write in some detail about the songs of Maxwell Davies, but had difficulty writing, even briefly, about the integration of voice and instruments in the songs of another composer.
- Q.9 Few candidates chose this question. Those who did were able to give a general survey of the use of the lute in various contexts.

Topic 2

- Q.10 There were some good answers here with most candidates who chose this topic selecting this question. Some wrote all they knew rather than linking their response to the specific question.
- Q.11 There was much potential material to discuss for this question, but, unfortunately, many candidates only knew the opening keys of the movements of Vivaldi's *Seasons* and were limited to discussing the Berlioz as '*more chromatic*'. It is vital that candidates are able to discuss the harmony/tonality of extended passages in detail.
- Q.12 This question was less popular, but candidates were able to write in some detail. Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture* and Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* were often selected for discussion.

Topic 3

- Q.13 Candidates demonstrated good knowledge and understanding in this question. Most chose the opening scene in their answer.
- Q.14 Here, candidates were comfortable when writing about Herrmann, but many were unable to find an appropriate comparison, discussing instead a much earlier or later composer.
- Q.15 Very few chose this question. Among those that did, Korngold and Steiner were popular composers.

Topic 4

- Q.16 A question on vocal timbres might have been an obvious possibility in relation to *Stimmung*. Candidates were able to write in general terms about the music, but were much less assured when dealing with the specifics.
- Q.17 Much as in Q.11, candidates were able to write about the bare outlines of movements, but missed much detail and were unable to demonstrate close familiarity with the music.
- Q.18 The few candidates who chose this question were able to select appropriate examples from the wealth of relevant material from this period.

Topic 5

- Q.19 Most responses demonstrated good understanding of the use of harmony and tonality in *Dido and Aeneas*, but candidates did not always refer to extended passages as required by the question. Centres are reminded that extended sections of the work should be studied, not just isolated numbers.
- Q.20 This was a popular question. Candidates were able to write in considerable detail, though some were less assured in their answers on Wagner.
- Q.21 Few candidates chose this question. Music by Verdi was usually chosen, with candidates able to demonstrate in general terms how the drama was interpreted in the music. Detailed answers were rare.

Topic 6

- Q.22 There were some pleasing answers to this question with many candidates able to write in some detail about the use of technology and recording processes found in *A Night at the Opera*.
- Q.23 Few candidates chose this question. Those that did were able to write in some detail about the songs of Norah Jones, but knew little about the use of harmony and tonality in their other chosen songwriter, often Amy Winehouse.
- Q.24 There were some detailed surveys of the music of the Beatles and, often, the Kinks in answers to this question, with candidates demonstrating good understanding of the contrasting musical styles featured.

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