

Exemplar Materials

GCSE Music: J535

Units: B351 B352 B353

This Support Material booklet is designed to accompany the OCR GCSE Music specification for teaching from September 2009

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Introduction

OCR has produced these materials to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCSE Music specification.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, to illustrate how the assessment tasks might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. Candidates' work demonstrates what a range of responses might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed responses.

Unit B351 - Performances

Example 1 – CD Track 1

Instrument: Flute

Composer: Lennox Berkeley

Title of piece: Sonata 1st Movement

Examiner's Commentary

Whilst not absolutely perfect this performance clearly demonstrates a highly able candidate performing a very difficult piece at a standard that is exceptional and therefore above that of the standard normally expected at GCSE level.

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance is confident, fluent and accurate, and demonstrates mastery of the instrument. The candidate shows excellent breath control, articulation, intonation and some well executed double tonguing. There are one or two tiny blemishes in the finger work but this does not spoil the performance as they are far outweighed by the excellence of the whole.

12/12

Communication and Interpretation

The performance shows a very high level of stylistic understanding and it is very convincing. The candidate shows good contrasts between the broader melodic passages and the more exciting passages requiring faster finger work and some double tonguing. It is a memorable interpretation of the piece.

12/12

Difficulty

This piece is clearly one of a high level. It is fast, has a very wide range of notes and has passages that include difficult leaps, very fast and nimble finger work, and well controlled breathing. This piece enables the highest difficulty mark to be awarded.

6/6

TOTAL 30/30

Example 2 – CD Track 2

Instrument: Soprano voice

Composer: Richard Strauss

Title of piece: Die Nacht

Examiner's Commentary

Although quite slow, this is a difficult song with a large range that requires good breath control. The candidate produces a highly polished performance that is sung with thoughtfulness and shows excellent control throughout.

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance is confident, fluent and accurate, and demonstrates mastery of the voice. The candidate shows excellent breath control and intonation. The many leaps are always well controlled and the long lines are sustained with confidence. The performance is worthy of the top mark.

12/12

Communication and Interpretation

The candidate produces a very well shaped performance that is memorable and shows a high level of stylistic understanding. She interprets the music beautifully with controlled application of dynamic shading and vibrato. This is a thoughtful and convincing performance worthy of full marks.

12/12

Difficulty

The slow tempo presents many challenges in terms of breath control, tone production and sustained lines. The piece has a number of very difficult leaps and the range is quite large requiring control of both higher and lower notes.

6/6

TOTAL: 30/30

Example 3 – CD Track 3

Instrument: Beatboxing

Composer: Inspired by DJ Icey's Breakbeat Style

Title: I wish

Examiner's Commentary

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance is completely fluent and shows mastery of a very wide repertoire of techniques. Because of the improvisatory nature of the performance, the matter of accuracy cannot apply. This is not an issue in awarding full marks for this style of performance.

12/12

Communication and Interpretation

This performance is memorable showing individuality and a high level of stylistic understanding

12/12

Difficulty

The performance uses a complexity of rhythm and pitch using a wide repertoire of sounds including:

- *Vibrating lips*
- *Rushing air/intake of breath*
- *Tongue clicks*
- *Whispering*
- *Singing voice*

It therefore fully meets the demand for the highest difficulty mark.

6/6

TOTAL 30/30

Example 4 – CD Track 4

Instrument: Rapping

Composer: Black the Ripper

Title: My Wifey

Examiner's Commentary

This song is performed with a direct sense of style. The delivery is confident and clear. The candidate keeps with the backing track in a controlled but relaxed way, allowing for cross rhythms, rather than being too measured and stilted.

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance is confident and fluent with generally good technical control.

10/12

Communication and Interpretation

This performance is strong and clear with some attention to the stylistic detail. There is a little dynamic variety and some interpretation of the words evident.

9/12

Difficulty

The performance requires rhythmic variety to deliver the words, a range of pitch for emphasis and expression, and a small amount of dynamic contrast. There is a challenge in fitting a lot of words to the accompaniment and this brings it into the 2-3 band of marks. To achieve a higher difficulty mark, a performance would need to be faster, include some singing and/or a contrasting section.

3/6

TOTAL 22/30

Example 5 – CD Track 5

Instrument: ICT

Composer: Mancini

Title: Pink Panther

Examiner's Commentary

To complete this sequenced Performance the candidate used a Clarinet Trio arrangement of 'Pink Panther' and demonstrated the following skills:

- *Notating the individual parts using Sibelius*
- *Listening for accuracy and balance*
- *Adjusting the dynamics, adding more subtle markings to ensure the melody can be heard above the lower parts*
- *The final version was then exported as an 'audio' track 'wav' file*

The performance is assessed against the realising criteria on page 61 of the specification.

Fluency and technical control

The outcome is fluent and shows good technical control of the software. It therefore deserves a high mark.

10/12

Communication and interpretation

The recording is well balanced although sometimes Parts 2 and 3 sound a bit stodgy and would have benefited from some staccato additions.

6/12

Difficulty

The piece meets the minimum requirement of having three sequenced parts. Beyond that, there are a range of technical demands including a variety of rhythms articulation and dynamics. It therefore can be awarded a difficulty mark just into the second band.

2/6

TOTAL 18/30

Example 6 – CD Track 6

Instrument: Trumpet

Composer: Anon

Title: Rondo

Examiner's Commentary

This is a short straightforward piece which contains a limited range of notes. There is a rhythmic inaccuracy near to the beginning which is quickly recovered from, and the rest is secure. The intonation is an issue because the tuning is sharp. The performance is quite well presented and attention is paid to dynamic contrast. The rit at the end is well controlled and appropriate.

Fluency and technical control

The performance meets the descriptor for the 6-8 band of marks. The sharp tuning and the mistake at the beginning prohibit it from being placed higher.

8/12

Communication and interpretation

There is some attention to detail and the performance conveys a sense of the style. This warrants a mark at the top of the 6-8 band.

8/12

Difficulty

The piece meets the criteria for the 0-1 band fully but does not contain further challenges which would allow for a mark any higher.

1/6

TOTAL 17/30

Example 7 – CD Track 7

Instrument: Drum Kit

Composer:

Title: Speed Data

Examiner's Commentary

The performance whilst generally secure is not as rhythmically tight as it could be, with some unevenness in the quavers and a slight variation in the pulse. It does use a range of techniques with syncopation and uses the range of the kit. It is nevertheless quite short.

Fluency and technical control

The performance meets the descriptor for the 6-8 band of marks. The performance fully meets the demands of the 6-8 band but does not have the technical control required for the next band.

8/12

Communication and interpretation

The piece has a sense of direction and some shape. The performance becomes more confident as it progresses. It just meets the criteria for the 9-11 band.

9/12

Difficulty

The piece has some intricate technical demands: syncopation, cross hand work, and the use of the full range of the kit. The brevity of the piece does not give the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate sustained control, so 4 rather than 5 marks are appropriate here.

4/6

TOTAL 21/30

Unit B352 - Performances

Examples 1 and 2 – CD Track 8

Instrument: This is a performance of a beatboxer and rapper in ensemble

Title: Taking the Mick

Examiner's Commentary

1 *Beatboxing*

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance maintains a secure tempo and is fluent. There is good technical control appropriate to the limited demand of the piece.

9/12

Interpretation and Ensemble Awareness

The performer fulfils the role of providing the steady beat for the rapper which is fitting for their role in the group.

6/12

Difficulty

The piece has a simple idea which is repeated as an 8 bar phrase. It is an example of the simplest level of beatboxing.

0/6

TOTAL 15/30

2 *Rapping*

Fluency and Technical Control

The piece has adequate technical control but the tone production is basic. Therefore, it just accesses the 6-8 band.

6/12

Interpretation and Ensemble Awareness

The performance shows some sense of phrasing, but is rather quiet, and therefore lacks sensitivity to the demands of balance within the ensemble. There is little real interaction with the other part.

4/12

Difficulty

The piece has simple demands within a simple structure.

0/6

TOTAL 10/30

Example 3 – CD Track 9

Instrument: Multi-tracked performance (Main part: Voice).

Composer: Wheatus

Title: Teenage Dirtbag

Examiner's Commentary

This is a multi-tracked performance and is an example of how a candidate can create a group performance entirely alone.

To create this performance the candidate demonstrated the following skills:

- *Multi-track 'live' recordings - simple repetitive parts including:*
 - *bass guitar*
 - *electric guitar*
 - *drum kit*
 - *vocals*
 - *scratching**The candidate has basic skills on all the instruments listed above*
- *The 'live' recordings were each put on separate tracks using Cubase*
- *The Candidate then edited and enhanced the recording, e.g.*
 - *adding effects such as reverb and panning*
 - *editing the overall structure (e.g. deciding where to place the scratching effects; adding a fade at the end)*
- *The final mix was then exported as an 'audio' track .wav file*

The performance is assessed as a whole, in relation to fluency and technical control, and interpretation and ensemble awareness. The difficulty mark is based on the most challenging part undertaken.

Fluency and Technical Control

The intonation is only partially secure and if this piece were assessed purely on the vocal part it would achieve 3/12 marks. However the other parts are very much better controlled at a simple level and therefore this enhances the overall mark. On balance the performance merits a little under half marks.

5/12

Interpretation and Ensemble Awareness

The parts are coordinated together and the candidate demonstrates a reasonable level of group awareness.

6/12

Difficulty

The most challenging part is the vocal track, which has a range of over an octave. The difficulty applied to this performance is therefore 3.

3/6

TOTAL 14/30

Example 4 – CD Track 10

Instrument: Violin

Composer:

Title: Jig

Examiner's Commentary

This is a traditional ensemble with two equal parts. The performance is fluent and the ensemble holds well together. There is little dynamic variety and the quavers are not always exactly even. The spirit of the jig is only partially conveyed and there are intonation issues towards the end.

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance fully meets the criteria for the 6-8 band in full. Minor blemishes do not disrupt the flow of the music. It can just be awarded a mark in the 9-11 band but intonation issues prevent it being placed any higher.

9/12

Interpretation and Ensemble Awareness

Whilst the ensemble awareness is good, the performance is less successful in terms of intonation. It is barely stylish and therefore the mark can go no higher than the 6-8 band.

8/12

Difficulty

The piece requires sustained control and has a number of technical challenges including trills and off beat entries as well as a wide range. It can therefore be awarded a difficulty mark of 5

5/6

TOTAL 22/30

Example 5 – CD Track 11

Instrument: Keyboard

Composer: The Tweets

Title: The Birdie Song

Examiner's Commentary

This is an example of a piece which is limited by its length and technical demand. It uses the right hand of the keyboard only. There are errors in counting and the ensemble is essentially held together by the other player. There is little in this piece that can demonstrate performing technique at more than a basic level of playing the notes.

Fluency and Technical Control

The performance has some fluency and the piece is recognisable. There are errors in it which disturb the sense of metre. It therefore fits the 3-5 band of marks.

4/12

Interpretation and Ensemble Awareness

The candidate shows little awareness of the other part. The performance is largely held together by the accompanist following the candidate, and therefore it can only be awarded a mark in the lowest band here.

2/12

Difficulty

This piece is at the lowest level of difficulty defined by the criteria. It has limited technical demands and although there are some fast notes, there is no left hand part. Therefore it cannot be awarded more than 0 here

0/6

TOTAL 6/30

Unit B351 – Compositions

Example 1 – CD Track 12

Instrument: Piano

Title: The Rose Sonata

(Written and recorded)

Examiner's Commentary

Brief

The brief for the composition was to write a sonata movement modelled on the style of Mozart.

Core Criteria

There is much very musical material here, and some subtleties such as the return of the opening theme in the minor key in the development section. Some passages are a little mechanical but overall this is excellent work for GCSE. The additional features which make it individual are the skilful use of chromatic chords for dramatic effect.

15/15

Area of Study Criteria

The piece fulfils its brief and the writing for piano is modelled on Mozart's style with characteristic alberti figurations and a range of textures. There are overtones and hints of standard repertoire pieces here but not sufficient to be concerned about plagiarism.

5/5

This is an example of a composition that will achieve the very top mark in both assessment categories.

TOTAL 20/20

Example 2 – CD Track 13

Instrument: Piano

Title: Waltz

(Recorded)

Examiner's Commentary

Brief

The brief for the composition was to compose a waltz in the style of Chopin.

Core Criteria

The composition is stylish and memorable showing an advanced understanding of harmonic subtleties. It shows a level of composition skill which is above the standard normally expected at GCSE

15/15

Area of Study Criteria

The piece was submitted as an Area of Study 1 composition linking it with the Waltz in Ab which was performed. It is totally in keeping with the rhythms, melodies and structure of the romantic piano waltz.

5/5

This piece could have been submitted as either Composition 1 or 2 since it is a dance. It would have achieved an equally high mark if assessed against the Area of Study 3 criteria.

TOTAL 20/20

Example 3 – CD Track 14

Instrument: Viola (and Piano)

Title: Pluto for Viola and Piano

(Recorded)

Examiner's Commentary

Brief

The candidate has performed an arrangement of Jupiter from Holst's The Planets, and the brief is to create a similar piece for the same combination.

Core Criteria

The composition has a successful melody which is musically shaped and which fits the underlying harmonies. The structure supports this well. The piece makes a coherent composition but lacks individuality and imagination: it is a craftsman like piece. The composition therefore fully meets the criteria for the 9-11 band of marks and can be awarded 11.

11/15

Area of Study Criteria

The writing is appropriate for the viola (which is the focus instrument) although the piano writing is rather bland. The candidate performs the viola part and the performance blemishes do not affect the assessment of the composition. Indeed this is good practice for candidates to be involved as performers, where possible, in the realisation of their work.

As the viola is used effectively in this piece, it deserves a mark of 4. The weaker piano writing does not therefore affect this mark.

4/5

TOTAL: 11 + 4 = 15/20

Example 4 – CD Track 15

Instrument: Trumpet (and Piano)

Title: Simple piece for Trumpet and Piano (recorded and written – the score is assessed)

Examiner's Commentary

Brief

The candidate indicated the intention to compose a simple piece in ternary form for trumpet and piano. The candidate's intention is to use a simple range of notes for the instrument and explore dynamic contrasts.

Core Criteria

The piece uses harmony in a functional way and the piano figurations are repetitive. The piece has consistency and coherence up to a point. There are ideas which lack effective shaping and this limits the musical impact. A mark of 7/15 is appropriate here

Area of Study Criteria

The piece is performable and uses the instrument's capabilities reasonably successfully. It meets the brief in a simple way and therefore a mark of 3 would be awarded.

TOTAL: 7+3 = 10/20

Unit B352

Compositions with log and evaluation

Example 1 – CD Track 16

Title: Twosome

Area of Study 2: Two part composition for Oboe and bassoon (recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Composition - Core criteria

The composition contains successful 2-part counterpoint. There is a lively dialogue between the two players with appropriate writing for chosen instruments. Ideas are developed through imitation and inversion. There is an element of predictability about the piece and therefore the composition fits within the 13-15 band.

13/15

Area of Study Criteria

Similarly there is good use of instruments in combination and therefore a mark of 4 is appropriate here

4/5

TOTAL: 17/20

Log and Evaluation

The Log and Evaluation clearly sets out the musical decisions made as the work progressed. The candidate explains how the part-writing was conceived. There is an understanding of the varied effects created within the texture of the piece.

The log was written weekly by the candidate and summarises the work that has been done in school within and beyond the lessons, during each week (about 3 hours per week).

The evaluation lacks depth of perception.

The overall mark for this would be 8/10: if the evaluation had been of the same quality as the log, it could have been marked higher.

Mark for Log and Evaluation: 8/10

Composition: Twosome

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief:

- I am going to compose a 2-part piece for Oboe and Bassoon. I have chosen these instruments because they are from the same family (Woodwind) and will sound nice together. They are both 'double-reed' instruments, so they can make a strong clear sound which is effective for both short notes and held-on notes
- I am hoping to include quite a lot of imitation, like a conversation
- I want my piece to be in 2 sections (Binary Form) like a lot of Baroque music is.

Log:

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
08/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using quaver rhythms, I am notating various ideas as they come to mind. There is no real structure yet, but I am trying out lots of patterns and seeing if they work together • My ideas tend to be in 2-bar phrases, especially when I do imitation • I am experimenting with zig-zaggy ideas and broken chords • The music is in A minor • Sometimes I have the two parts imitating each other one bar apart and sometimes they take it in turns every beat. 	Discussion with teacher about the range of the Oboe and Bassoon to ensure suitable writing for chosen instruments
15/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In bars 5-8 I experimented with a sequence going down a note each time • By bar 8 I thought it was time that both parts played together, so they both do the same notes together and then go in opposite directions • From bar 9, I decided to bring back the ideas from the beginning and do the quavers in one part with a semibreve in the other • After a few bars I wanted to make the rhythms more lively again, with quicker changes between the two parts 	Discussion about the overall structure of the composition and the balance of sections.
22/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want my piece to be in 2 sections (Binary Form) like a lot of Baroque music is. So I have decided that I need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use a lot of the ideas from the 1st section in the 2nds, but invert them ○ change key to keep the music interesting • I didn't simply copy the ideas from the 1st section into the 2nd - the ideas are similar, but they are developed as well, swapping ideas between the two parts, and keeping the imitation going • I am still working on getting the 2 parts to overlap as well as to take it in turns - in bars 29 and 30 I am experimenting with the imitation and overlapping being only one quaver apart – I think this makes the music sound exciting • I am also experimenting with whether or not to keep the piece in A major to the end - I think I might prefer a change back to A minor like the piece started in 	No discussion with teacher.
29/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This week I am adding the finishing touches, making sure the notes sound right and adding expression markings. 	Reminder about finishing off the composition with performance directions

Evaluation of the piece:

My favourite bits of this piece are the playful ones like bars 5 and 13. I tried to keep the piece balanced with 2 sections of the same length. In the end the 2nd section was two bars longer, but I don't think this matters. There is a lot of imitation in the piece. I could have developed my ideas further if the piece was longer, but I like short pieces

Example 2 – CD Track 17

Title Indian Raga Composition

Examiner's Commentary

Area of Study 2: *Composition for two or more instruments*

This composition provides an example of a submission which is presented with an annotation. This is necessary where the composition is not written out in full and others are involved in the realisation of it.

The candidate has played a major role in the production of this piece even though it involves improvisation on the part of others. The extent of the candidate's input is made very clear both in the annotation and the log. If this were not so, the assessor would have to include this information on the assessment form. The Tala and Raga patterns provide an effective basis for characteristic improvisatory ideas. The overall structure has been well thought out, allowing for development of ideas. There is clear communication and imitation between the players, led by the composer.

Composition - Core Criteria

The candidate's identifiable contribution to this piece meets all of the criteria for the 6-8 band of marks. The fact that the initial ideas are all the candidate's and that there is development of some of the ideas in the drum part which the candidate is improvising, suggests a higher mark. The ideas are musical and the structure created allows for a balance of unity and variety. Therefore, a mark of 10/15 can be awarded. A higher mark is not possible because of the additional compositional techniques that are put in by the other performers.

Area of Study Criteria

The piece has been put together by the candidate with a clear understanding of the roles of the performers. Therefore, a mark of 4/5 is merited.

TOTAL: 14/20

Log and Evaluation

The Log and Evaluation gives a clear account of the process with some musical decisions articulated. The brief is a list of features of the content of the piece. The evaluation says more about the positioning of the players for the recording than about the quality of the musical outcome. Therefore, although some aspects of the log may point to a higher mark, on balance the quality of the whole package points to a mark at the top of the 3-5 band.

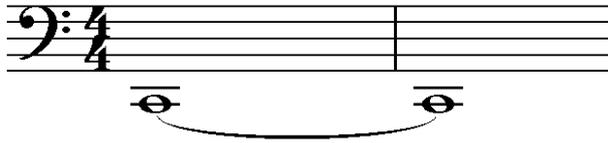
Mark for Log and Evaluation: 5/10

Composition: Indian Raga

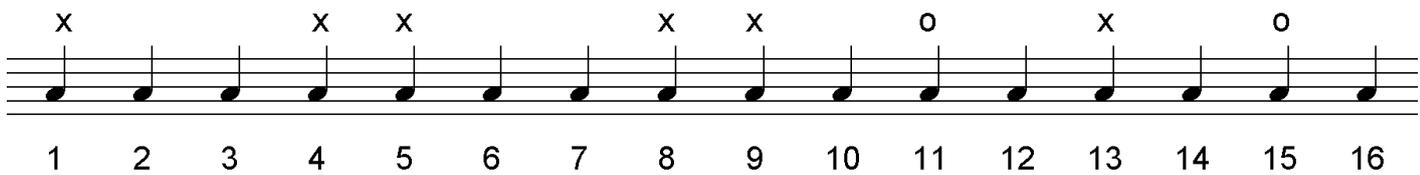
'East Meets West'

Structure

1. 'Cello - hold on to 'C' at the beginning:



2. Tabla - introduces the Tal:

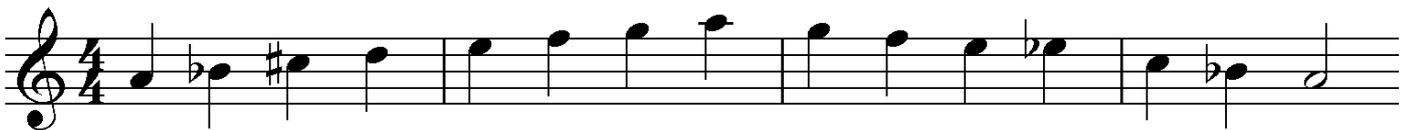


Above, is the basic outline (which is accented on the beats with a 'x' and quieter on the beats with an 'o'). The Tabla player adds extra improvised decoration and off-beat rhythms throughout the piece.

3. 'Cello - plays an ostinato drone (plucked):



4. Here is the Raga scale for the Saxophone in E \flat :



Here is the Raga scale for the Flute:



Composition: Indian Raga

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I am preparing ideas for an Indian Raga composition. I want it to combine Indian ideas with Western ideas, so the instruments will be

- Tabla drums
- Saxophone
- Flute
- 'Cello

Much of the piece will be improvised, but I will write down:

- The Tal (which I will improvise on using Tabla drums)
- A Raga scale (for the Saxophone and Flute to use)
- A drone part (for the 'Cello)
- An overall structure (involving an Intro, some imitation and an Ending)
- Some melodic ideas that I want the Saxophone and Flute to use

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
8/01/09	Practiced some rhythms	
13/01/09	Worked out a Raga scale which I have given to the Saxophone and Flute players to experiment with improvising on.	Shown how to transpose the scale for the sax player.
15/01/09	Planned the overall structure of my piece Worked out short written ideas for the other performers and we have had a go at doing some live improvising.	Talked to teacher about what to tell the others to do with the music I give them. Told the Saxophone and Flute players to spend some time imitating each other, but then at other times to do some 'free' improvising of their own (at the same time)
22/01/09	Explained to the other performers about the importance of the 'Sam' – I needed everyone to play together on the 1 st beat every four bars. Did more practice together	Discussion with players to be aware of Tabla lead at all times even when concentrating on improvisation and imitation
29/01/09	Did recording. I want the piece to last about 3 minutes and I am going to give a nod to the players when I want them to play or to change to the next bit. I am going to communicate through my playing whether I want the music to be calm or excited	Help from teacher about where to place microphones

Evaluation of the piece:

I wanted the Tabla and Saxophone to be the most prominent sound and this has happened on the recording. I wanted the Flute to be a bit further away so it sounds more like an echo. The 'Cello could have done with being a bit louder though and I would have preferred the held on notes to have lasted longer. I am pleased with the melodic ideas and I liked my piece.

Example 3 – CD Track 18

Title: Dolly's Waltz

Area of Study 3: Dance composition: Waltz

(Recorded and written – the written version is assessed)

Examiner's Commentary

Composition

Core Criteria

The composition has good melodic shapes and successful harmony. There are clear balanced sections with appropriate writing for the chosen instruments. The modulation is well handled and provides an interesting contrast. There is development of ideas in the final sections. The whole is craftsman like but not particularly imaginative. Therefore a mark at the top of the 9-11 band fits the piece.

Area of Study Criteria

The piece conveys the spirit of the waltz in a rather predictable way. Rhythmically it is not particularly waltz like in the opening sections, and the accompaniment takes a well-trodden path with only occasional variety. A mark of 3 here would be appropriate.

TOTAL: 9+3=12/20

Log and Evaluation

The Log and Evaluation give a good account of the musical decisions made as the work progressed. The candidate shows attention to detail that enhances a rather straightforward brief. The evaluation shows some understanding of the impact of the music, and therefore the whole just accesses the 6-8 band.

Mark for Log and Evaluation: 6/10

Composition: Dolly's Waltz

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I am going to compose a waltz for flute and piano with the following features:

- 'Um cha cha' backing
- 'Melody with accompaniment' texture (flowing melody)
- Three main sections, with a modulation in the middle (maybe from major to minor)
- A range of dynamics
- A moderately fast tempo

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
08/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To begin with I am working on getting a melody that flows. To do this, I am using mostly next-door notes or notes of a broken chord• I am trying to make sure that the melody has regular 2-bar and 4-bar phrases• I have created a score using Sibelius with a flute and piano part, but I have only written ideas in the flute part so far	Discussion with teacher about how to plan a composition and how to structure a melody
15/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This week I have been working on the piano part. I have been writing some chords in an 'um cha cha' style, with the 'um' in the left hand and the 'cha cha' in the right hand• I am using C major chords at the beginning with alternating Cs and Gs in the left hand• I think the backing fits well with the melody so far• I have decided to have a 4-bar introduction with piano only before the flute melody comes in	
22/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I have worked mainly on the middle section• I decided to go from C major to F major as it sounds more cheerful than changing to a minor key• I am writing longer phrases in this section and contrasting next-door notes with octave leaps	Teacher suggested I looked up notes on key signatures.
29/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am making the final section like the first one, but with triplets and passing notes to develop my ideas• To end the piece I want to have an 'outro' with just the piano• In the middle section I have been adding a few 'fill-ins' in the piano part while the flute holds a long note on at the end of a phrase• Then I went through the piece adding the dynamics – mostly crescendos and diminuendos, with a <i>rit</i> at the end	Teacher asked me to think about what other musical elements to include.

Evaluation of the piece:

I think that I have created a good waltz effect. I particularly like the middle section, because the modulation is interesting and the different melody makes a change. I have been careful to add dynamics and phrase marks. I have worked hard to get the right chords to go with the tune – I found this quite easy because I am a pianist

Example 4 – CD Track 19

Title: Reeling about

Area of Study 3: Dance composition: Reel

(Written and Recorded)

Examiner's Commentary

Composition

This is a short but effective composition.

Core Criteria

The piece has simple ideas which good melodic shape and successful harmony although there is a lot of repetition. There is clear communication and imitation between the parts. The phrases are balanced and there is appropriate writing for the chosen instruments. There is some imaginative writing in the juxtaposition of ideas in the final section. The single punctuating bars between phrases help to frame the ideas and it was effective to use the Violin for this before the final section begins. The piece therefore just accesses the 12-14 band.

12/15

Area of Study Criteria

The piece contains a number of characteristics of the Reel and effectively conveys the spirit of the dance. It accesses a mark of 4.

4/5

TOTAL: 12+4 = 16/20

Log and Evaluation

The Log and Evaluation is very basic and it is a shame that a candidate of this calibre could not provide more detail, or give reasons for the success of the piece. Since each section has been completed (albeit sketchily) it can be awarded a mark.

Mark for Log and Evaluation: 1/10

Composition: Reeling about

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I am going to compose a Reel for Violin, Tin Whistle and Accordion.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
08/01/09	I started on Sibelius	Teacher talked to me a bit.
15/01/09	I carried on then came back after school to do some more on the computer.	Got asked to leave as the teacher was going home.
22/01/09	I did some more and had to come back twice this week to get more done. I forgot to write the log so I just wanted to say I did hours this week	Teacher told me to write more in the log. Don't know what his problem is.
29/01/09	Did lots of copying and pasting as I realised it is quicker than keep writing the notes. I have not had to create too many ideas to make them last.	Teacher said I needed more dynamics...!

Evaluation of the piece:

I think that I have created a lively Reel that could be danced to.

Example 5 – CD Track 20

Title: The Toys

Area of Study 4: Descriptive piece

(Written and recorded – the recording is assessed)

Examiner's Commentary

Composition

This piece has been created using the Cubase software programme. The candidate has written their piece for a specific group of orchestral instruments. The candidate has used a mixture of both playing in and 'putting in' techniques.

Core Criteria

The candidate was very clear in his intentions and the story is conveyed within the music. The structure of the music is well defined and the outcome is quite effective. The piece demonstrates good understanding of some stylistic conventions and uses an advanced range of compositional techniques. It has a sense of style but lacks the higher level of imagination to access higher marks in this band.

12/15

Area of Study Criteria

The link to the intended brief is very strong. The piece tells the story very well. The music is convincing and therefore full marks are warranted.

5/5

TOTAL: 17/20

Log and Evaluation

The intent here is clear and shows a simple level of musical understanding. Although the candidate writes in detail about the progress made each week, there is a limit to the musical reasoning shown to the decisions made. The evaluation is rather limited and only shows an understanding of the outcome without much insight into its effectiveness.

The candidate worked in school independently of any support and therefore has written nothing in the right hand column.

Mark for Log and Evaluation: 5/10

Composition: The Toys

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I am a ballet dancer and have recently performed in the Nutcracker ballet. Because of this I thought that it would be good write a piece about toys. The idea comes from the part of the ballet where the toys all come to life. I think I will have some toy soldiers and a teddy bear that start to play together and then a little girl wakes up and joins them. I will have a section for the for the toy soldiers first, it will need to be march like and then a section for the teddy bear, this will need to be more fun. Then I will have a tune for the little girl and towards the end I will try to put all my ideas together to represent them playing altogether.

I will start my piece in C major and change key during the piece and end back in C major again. I will use trumpets for the soldiers and woodwind instruments for the teddy bear. I will also have some strings. I think these instruments will complement each other and work well to tell my story.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
8/9/08	I decided to start my piece with the toy soldiers. Trumpets seem to be the right sound for them, but I have also added a snare drum and I have written a sort of fanfare to start my piece. It is in a march style, in C major and based on chords. The snare drum has really helped to give a marching sound.	
15/9/08	I have decided to give the strings some chords to accompany the trumpets, and I have made the trumpets play their tune in a round.	I want to try and finish this section next week.
22/9/08	I have finished the toy soldiers section this week and I am really pleased with how it sounds.	
29/9/08	I have thought about how I will depict my teddy bear and today I have put some ideas into the computer. I have decided to write this section in F major and change the time signature to 6/8. This will give the bouncy style for the section. I have given the tune to the clarinet and the cellos have a bass line, but I have not got very far. I am finding it quite hard.	My teacher played me a bit from teddy bears picnic to help me with my ideas.
6/10/08	I have done some more on my teddy bear section today and I feel better about it now.	
13/9/08	I have spent some time today getting from my soldier section to my teddy bear section. I have made it quite simple with just couple of chords that take me into the new key and then I have gone straight to the new section. I have also done a bit more to my teddy bear section.	
2/11/08	I have decided to add a soldier to the next bit and also the snare drum. This shows the teddy bear and one of the soldiers together.	
10/11/08	Today I have introduced the little girl. I gave a tune to the flute and that is meant to represent her. I am trying to fit this tune to the other music that I have written for the soldier and the teddy bear. They are all playing together.	
17/11/08	I am not finding the section with them all playing together easy. I have managed to a bit more today and I hope that I will be able to finish it off next week.	
1/12/08	I have nearly finished this section and I am going to have a bit where the girl, teddy bear, and soldiers are separate.	

8/12/08	I have completely finished this section and next week I will go back into the original key and time signature to end my piece.	
15/12/08	I have put the little girls tune into 4/4 and ended the piece very quietly and simply to represent the little girl going back to sleep.	
22/12/08	I have looked over my piece today and adjusted some of the dynamics to finish off.	

Evaluation of the piece:

I am really pleased with my piece. It has worked out almost exactly as I had hoped. Each of my tunes sounds good and represents the characters well. I think the instruments that I chose are good, especially the soldiers.

I did not find it easy to do. Some of the sections were quite straight forward. The soldiers section seemed to work well and the first part of the teddy bear section was ok, but the section where all the characters played together was really hard. I think that it turned out as I wanted, I am sure that I could improve it but I am happy with it overall.

Example 6 – CD Track 21

Title: The Weather

Area of Study 4: Descriptive piece

(Recorded only)

Examiner's Commentary

Composition

This piece has been created using the Cubase software programme. The candidate has written the piece for several glockenspiels, harp, percussion, pad sounds and has used some sound effects.

Core Criteria

The piece has a clear musical structure and shows a variety of simple techniques with some development of ideas. The ideas are thoughtfully conceived and the piece shows stylistic consistency. Some of the ideas are quite simple.

10/15

Area of Study Criteria

The link to the intended brief is good. The piece conveys the mood of the story very effectively but it is not powerful enough to gain the very top mark.

4/5

TOTAL: 14/20

Log and Evaluation

The brief shows a clear intent that is well thought out and musically conceived with a good level of musical understanding. The story chosen is clear and there is evidence of how the candidate intends to communicate this in the music composed. The candidate writes in detail the progress made each week and is able to reflect on it musically to decide what to do next. The evaluation is thoughtful and shows a very good level of understanding of what was successful and what could have been improved. Overall this log and evaluation just reaches the top mark.

10/10

Composition: The Weather

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I intend to compose a piece of descriptive music that interprets the weather. The music will tell a story that starts with the pitter-patter of rain and a gentle breeze. The music here will be soft and gentle, start with long note values that gradually get shorter to show the rain getting harder. There will be a melody that will be high and in a major key to represent the sun that will try to shine through the clouds. This melody will be light, lively and bright but eventually the rain will get heavier and there will be a storm with a howling gale and crashes of thunder. The storm will be in a minor key, it will be loud and much lower than the sun melody, it will also be heavy with thick chords to represent the noise made by a storm. The storm will die down and the original melody will return because the sun has come out again.

I am going to write my piece using Cubase and I will use instruments like the glockenspiel and xylophone for my sun melody because these instruments will be able to convey the light bright atmosphere that I want to create. I will also use these instruments for the accompaniment as well because this will add to the light effect. I will use various orchestral pad sounds in the storm section that will be loud and heavy. They will be quite sustained and low in pitch. I will also use percussion instruments like the cymbal and timpani as well to create the thunder – timpani and lightening - cymbal. I also want to use the sound effect of the seashore to create a calm peaceful effect before and after the storm.

My piece will be in C major at the start and then move into C minor for the storm section. It will be in 4 beats in a bar and have a steady tempo, although it might sound as if it is getting faster because of using shorter note values as the rain starts and for the storm.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
8/9/08	We studied a lot of descriptive music in year 10 and I have spent some time over the summer holiday thinking about my piece before deciding exactly what I was going to do. I wrote my brief last lesson and now I am quite excited about starting my piece. Today I have tried to write a tune that will represent the sun. I have written it in C major as I said I would with a simple chord accompaniment for two different glockenspiels. The use of a major key and a high tune and accompaniment should help to create the bright, sunny atmosphere that my piece needs to begin with.	
15/9/08	Having written my tune I gone back in my piece now and have thought how I would start it. I want to have a gentle effect of the 'pitter-patter' of rain. I decided that it would be good to build up the rhythm from minims to crotchets to quavers. This gives the effect that the rain is getting harder. I have put this in before my sun tune and I am pleased with how it sounds. There is still a light feeling because this section just gives the impression of a summer shower.	
22/9/08	This week I listened to my piece so far and decided to add a little piano part on at the beginning by way of an introduction. I have written this up high with a little trill and then a descending chromatic scale because this will help set the right atmosphere of summer. I have also put in the seashore sound effect which I think really makes it sound good. A lovely summer day by the sea with a light patter of rain.	

29/9/08	Today I have spent some time deciding how to move into my storm passage. I want the music to move into the tonic minor for the storm section so I have decided to gradually change my sun tune to sound more minor to lead into it. This helps to give the gradual build up of the storm not a sudden burst into it. I have also decided to add a high drum, beating on the beat and getting louder to help to build the tension at this point.	My teacher listened to the piece today and was very encouraging.
6/10/08	I want my storm section to be really loud so I have changed the sounds for this bit. Glockenspiels are not suitable for loud chords so I am using orchestral pads that have a lot of texture and depth to them. I have written loud chords with lots of notes in them that repeat and sound very powerful. The bass notes are low and the chords are built just above them, this is what gives the music its power. The repeating chords are quite simple but they are intense and are totally different to the previous section so the contrast is exciting. Hopefully I will be able to finish this section next week.	
13/9/08	I have managed to finish the chords, but recognise that the chords alone are not enough to create a storm so I have now added cymbal crashes to it. This really helps to give the thunder and lightening idea.	
2/11/08	When I listened to my piece through today I felt that the chords and cymbal in the storm did not really show the lightening like I thought they did last week. I have played around with various ideas and think I will add a high ostinato scale pattern, up and down, on the harp. This not only helps to give the piece more of a thunder AND lightening feel but also gives the idea of the sun trying to fight with the storm.	
10/11/08	I have spent my time today changing some of the volumes for my parts. I have tried to get a crescendo between the end of the sun tune, where it goes 'minory' into the storm scene and I have tried to make the storm really loud. It is still not quite as extreme as I would like it to be but it does show the general idea.	My teacher suggested that I think about the dynamics a little more to see what I thought would enhance my piece.
1/12/08	Today I have begun working on the bit when the storm finishes. My storm needs to get weaker and then stop. In order to do this I will shorten the note values again, slow the music down and have a decrescendo. I have also decided to put in a new little melody that is once again high up to indicate calmness. I will try to get that done next week.	
8/12/08	I have written my new melody for the glockenspiel today. I think it works well to have something different before the sun tune comes back again. I have made my new melody bright and cheerful again to show that everyone is happy that the sun has come out.	
15/12/08	I have decided to repeat my sun tune from the beginning again to help to unify the piece and give it sort of 'arc' come ternary feel.	
22/12/08	I have just repeated the last few notes of the sun melody to end my piece and I am quite pleased with how it sounds. I need to spend some time today tidying it up and finishing off the dynamics to create as good a piece as I can.	

Evaluation of the piece:

As I have said, I am really pleased with my piece. I think it conveys my story really well. The tune I have written for the sun is simple but I think it works well. Being high up and in C major makes it bright and this will help the listener to picture the sun shining. The build up of the rain is good and leads in well to the tune. For me the transition from major to minor is the best bit. The storm is good, but perhaps it would have been better if I had ended it differently. It sort of just fizzles out. However, I think that the way the music becomes brighter and then the sun tune comes back is good and works well creating a unified piece.

I think I could have done more with the dynamics – the crescendo is not really loud enough, and the storm should be more powerful. Overall the piece needs to be longer, to make more of the different moods. However I am also aware that the harmonic range is quite limited and if the piece were longer I would need to explore a wider variety of chords and even some more changes of key. I'm sure that I could have done more if I had had more time but I am pleased with what I did in the time that I had.

Examples 7 and 8 demonstrate two different types of arrangement of the same piece.

Example 7 – CD Track 22

Title: Sticky Toffee

Area of Study 2: Arrangement for two or more instruments

(Recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Arrangement

This piece has been created using Cubase software. The candidate has chosen to write for a brass quartet.

The candidate has transcribed the piece from the piano to the four brass instruments. Most of the tune is in the trumpet part and the chordal accompaniment in the lower three parts. There are a few places where the candidate has shared the melodic interest out between the trumpet and horns. The candidate has made an accurate arrangement but as it stays close to the original musical material, it demonstrates little creativity.

Core Criteria

The mark for the core criteria would be in the lower bands. The piece is a very good transcription and there is some craftsmanship in the sharing of material between the parts at times. The lack of any real creativity beyond this means that the piece will only attain a mark in the 3-5 band.

4/15

Area of Study Criteria

The candidate has written the piece quite successfully for a brass quartet with understanding of how the parts work together. This would place the piece in the middle band of marks here.

3/5

TOTAL: 7/20

Log and Evaluation

The log and evaluation shows a clear intent but it is quite basic in nature. The candidate has documented the progress made week by week but this is somewhat limited. The evaluation is accurate, with the candidate stating what they felt was successful and acknowledging the limitations in the way it had been arranged. It attains the second band of marks.

4/10

Arrangement: Sticky toffee

Brief, log and evaluation

Area of Study 4

Brief

To arrange one of my Grade 2 piano pieces for my school brass group. I also play the horn so I thought it would be good to arrange a piece that I know well for a group of instruments that I understand. There are four of us in my brass group – 1 trumpet, 2 horns and a trombone.

I will write it using Cubase software.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
15/9/08	After preparing my ideas I have set up my template on Cubase and chosen the instrument sounds.	My teacher suggested that I looked carefully at the ranges of the instruments before I start writing.
22/9/08	I have started playing in the tune and found it quite difficult to make it look right.	My teacher helped me to quantise some of the parts so that they looked right.
29/9/08	From the left hand of the piano I have worked out who to give the bass note to and how to separate the chord notes. I have put in the first few bars today.	
6/10/08	I have put some more of my arrangement onto Cubase	My teacher suggested that it might be good to try and put in some different ideas that are not in the piano piece.
13/9/08	I have put some more of my arrangement onto Cubase	
2/11/08	I have put some more of my arrangement onto Cubase	
10/11/08	I have completed all of my tune for the trumpet and have nearly finished the rest.	
17/11/08	I have finished.	My teacher talked about the idea of spreading out some of the music between the parts.
1/12/08	I have decided that it is a bit boring so I am going to move some of the parts around to share the tune a bit.	
8/12/08		

Evaluation of the piece:

I am very pleased with my piece. It sounds exactly like the piano piece, but more fun because it for brass. I found it easy to put all my parts in and it was good to swap some of the tunes about in the trumpet and horns. The trombone is a bass instrument and he needed to have the bass part and I am pleased with the sound that it gives.

I think my arrangement might be a little too close to the original but it was hard to know how to change it so I thought that as it sounded good I would leave it as it was.

Example 8 – CD Track 23

Title: Sticky Toffee 2

Area of Study 2: Arrangement for two or more instruments

(Recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Arrangement

This piece has been created using the Cubase software programme. The candidate has chosen to write for a wind quintet.

The candidate wrote a fairly comprehensive brief outlining clearly how the piece was to be arranged. The change in time signature that the candidate chose works well and the simplification of the chords achieves the style that the candidate intended. The candidate was creative in the reworking of the material and the addition of an original melody is effective.

Core Criteria

The materials in the arrangement have been reshaped successfully and musically and they are appropriate to the style chosen by the candidate. The addition of an introduction that also acts as a bridge passage helps to give a unified feel to the piece. The candidate shows understanding of a wide range of compositional techniques. The arrangement is effective and very imaginative enabling full marks to be awarded.

15/15

Area of Study Criteria

The candidate has written the piece successfully for a wind quintet. (It is quite acceptable that the parts have not been transposed in the score). The candidate uses the instruments effectively and has a clear understanding of their capabilities. There is very good dialogue and characterful use of instruments, enabling the highest mark to be awarded.

5/5

TOTAL: 20/20

Log and Evaluation

The brief sets out a clear intent that is musically conceived and shows a good level of musical understanding. The candidate records the progress made each week and then reflects on it to decide upon the next course of action. The evaluation is succinct and to the point but perhaps a little less detailed than the other sections. This will bring the mark down a little, but overall this is a good piece of work.

8/10

Arrangement: Sticky Toffee 2

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I have found a piano piece called Sticky Toffee by Michael Jacques. I am going to arrange it for a wind quintet because I play the flute and I have recently been to a concert performed by my teachers' quintet. I liked sound that the combination of instruments made and thought it would be good to do my arrangement for it. The piano piece is quite a simple piece but it is jazzy. I'm going to change the style and make it into a waltz. I think that changing the rhythm will be quite successful. Using the wind quintet will mean that I can use the bassoon for the bass line – first beats of the bar, the horn and clarinet will be able to do the chords and the oboe and flute will be good for the melody and counter melody lines. I will write an introduction for my piece and at one point I will make up my own tune to go with the chords, this will help me to get some variety into the piece.

I will write it using Cubase software. It would be lovely if my teacher's quintet could play it for me when I have finished but I don't know if they will be able to.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
8/9/08	I have set myself up a template on the Cubase programme. I have chosen my instruments and sorted out each track so that when I play it in I can quantise it and make it look right. I like the sounds of the instruments and hope that the arrangement will sound good.	
15/9/08	I have spent quite a while at the piano trying out ideas. I tried playing the tune in 3 beats in a bar and I really liked it so I will start today by putting the first part of the tune into the computer and then add the chords.	My teacher has suggested that I look carefully at the ranges of the instruments before I start writing so that I don't make any mistakes with writing things that they cannot play.
22/9/08	Today I have managed to finish the first 16 bars of my arrangement. I have done as I said and given the tune to the oboe first and then the flute. The other instruments are doing the um cha cha chords. I have not used exactly the same chords as the piano piece, I have simplified them because I don't think the jazzy style of chords is right with the waltz style piece. On the whole I am really pleased with it although it does seem a bit bare. I may try to add some ornamentation next lesson.	
29/9/08	I have decided to try and add my introduction today. I didn't want to start with this because I felt that I would know more what would work if I started the main part of the arrangement first. I will do an um cha cha chordal idea for a few bars before the tune starts.	
6/10/08	Having finished my introduction and added some little bits for the flute I decided to do the section with my own tune next. I used the same chords as I used for the first tune and then worked out a new tune to go over the top. I now have 2 tunes of 16 bars each, one based on the sticky toffee tune and one that I have made up. This gives some variety.	

13/9/08	I played what I had done already at the beginning of the lesson today and decided to put my introduction idea in between my first two tunes. I thought that this would make my piece more interesting and when I tried it I was really pleased. I then spent some time thinking about what I should do next.	My teacher discussed some ideas with me to help me extend my arrangement. I want it to be longer so I think I might try to a section in a different key.
2/11/08	I have decided to do a section in a minor key. I have used my introduction passage again but with minor chords instead of major. I have changed the first part of the tune and put it into the minor key. I think it sounds really good.	
10/11/08	I have used the introduction passage once again and put back into the major key. I have started doing the last part of the sticky toffee tune this lesson and I am getting towards the end of my piece.	
17/11/08	I have nearly finished my piece today and now I need to decide how I am going to end my piece.	My teacher reminded me about the idea of a coda that we have seen in many pieces so I will spend some time this week thinking about it and experimenting with ideas.
1/12/08	I decided to repeat the last four bars of the tune and I have used the idea in the second to last bar of the piano piece as coda. I have passed it through some of the instruments and then I have played a bar in unison and given the flute a slow trill to finish.	
8/12/08	I listened to my piece at the beginning of the lesson today and had the idea of using my coda idea at the beginning as well. So I have used the second to last bar idea from the piano piece again and I have given it to the flute first then the oboe and then clarinet. I am pleased with the way it sounds and feel that my piece is finished now.	

Evaluation of the piece:

I am really pleased with my piece and hope that my teacher may be able to play my piece at some point so that I can hear the real instruments playing. The Cubase sounds are quite good but not as good as the real thing.

I like the waltz idea for the piece, I think that the tune works well in the triple time and with the um cha cha accompaniment. The chords work well and I like the different sections and how they fit together to make a unified piece. Using the same idea at the beginning and the end is something that I am really pleased with and using the same chord bridge pattern between each section is also something that seems to work well. I think the idea of putting it into the minor key helps to give a really contrast from the rest of the piece and the tune that I wrote myself gives something that you cannot recognise from the piano piece so adds some unique parts to my arrangement.

It was fun to do and I feel that I have learnt a lot about composing from doing it.

Example 9 – CD Track 24

Title: Arrangement of Tick-Tock Tango

Area of Study 2: Arrangement of a piece of dance music

(Recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Arrangement

Core Criteria

This is not simply a transcription, but there is evidence of creativity in a number of areas:

- *the addition of an introduction*
- *alternating melodic phrase*
- *the 'Cello 'Habanera' rhythm*
- *the additional Double Bass notes*
- *the contrasting texture in the middle section*
- *additional melody notes (parallel part-writing)*
- *effects such as 'pizzicato'*

Within this there are limitations: there is little really inventive original material here. The materials are enhanced (9-11 band) rather than being reshaped (11-14 band), and this needs to be reflected in the mark in this section. The candidate may therefore have achieved a higher mark with a starting point which was more suitable for adaption and reshaping.

9/15

Area of Study Criteria

The arrangement has made the piece more like a Tango than the original, using the instruments well to enhance the spirit of the dance in an effective way.

4/5

TOTAL: 13/20

Log and Evaluation

The Log and Evaluation clearly sets out the musical decisions made as the work progressed. The candidate is able to explain the elements of creativity within exercise. There is an understanding of the aural and notated outcome

Mark for Arrangement: 12/15

Mark for Log and Evaluation: 8/10

Arrangement: Tick-Tock Tango

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

<p>I have found a Tango piano piece called 'Tick Tock Tango' by Heather Hammond. I like the piece because it is simple so I can add lots of ideas of my own. I notice that the melody is in two-bar phrases, so I intend to have two different instruments taking it in turns to play. The left-hand chords ought to be on an Accordion as this instrument is used a lot in Tango music. I will also use string instruments for these chords.</p> <p>I am starting a Sibelius file with the following instruments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solo Violin (for the melody) ○ Oboe (also for the melody) ○ Accordion (Bass clef only for the chords) ○ Violin (for the chord notes) ○ Viola (for the chord notes) ○ 'Cello (for a bass line)

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
11/1/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have decided to add a 4-bar introduction rather than bringing the melody in straight away. This is when I will do just the accompaniment • I have also decided to add a lower bass line ('Cello) with a dotted 'Habanera' rhythm to give a bit more style to the music. • This week I have completed 8 bars of the score. I have added some staccato and phrase marks but have not put any dynamics in yet 	Discussed possible instrumentation with the teacher, including how to do an imaginative arrangement rather than a straight transcription
18/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To begin with I decided to change my Accordion part. It had been in the bass clef originally but in bar 4 the low E was red, meaning that it was out of range. I changed it to an octave higher in the treble clef. I wasn't sure if it would sound alright, but it did. • This week I am working on the middle section (bars 9-16 in the original music). I notice that this section is marked 'p' and that the LH is in 5ths (not triads), so I have decided to give it a lighter feel. I will drop the Cello and Accordion parts for this section. • The melody part is sometimes in 3rds in bars 9-11. I have decided to get the Violin and Oboe parts to take it in turns to play the upper notes, and then play together in unison at the end of bar 12. • I like the higher and lighter effect of this middle section, although it does sound a bit empty at the moment 	Listened to the work so far with the teacher, discussing the range of the chosen instruments
25/01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This week I am working on the third section of the piece. I notice that in the original piano piece it is only 4 bars long, but I am going to make it an 8-bar section like the others are so that each section is balanced • I have decided to bring back the 4-bar phrase I wrote in bars 5-8 of the first section, after which I am including the ideas from the final 5 bars of the piano piece. • I am going to alternate the Violin and oboe parts again • At the end I will use the Violin and Oboe together and try to add some extra notes to make the parts parallel 	Further discussion re. overall structure and balance of sections

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the final bar I will have everyone playing the same rhythms together • I am also experimenting with a bit of percussion. I have decided to add a short Castanet rhythm every few bars. Next week I might add some more percussion, but I don't want to overdo it 	
01/02/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I keep listening to the piece as it is developing. I have decided that it needs a deeper bass line, so I am adding a Double Bass, highlighting the Cello notes. • I am also making the Cello and Bass lines 'pizzicato' as it brings out the rhythm a bit more. • The overall balance of dynamics needs working on so I am adding expression marks and then listening to see if it sounds alright • I want the accompanying introduction to be moderately loud, but to go quieter when the melody comes in on the Violin (keeping the Violin part at 'mf' so that it stand out) • I have decided that I don't need to write lots of dynamic markings for most of the piece, as the changes in texture give enough variety, but I am writing a crescendo at the end • I experimented with changing the accompanying parts to 'pizzicato' in the middle section, but I didn't like it so I changed it back again 	Discussion re. balance of individual parts

Evaluation of the piece:

I like the arrangement and I think that it is an improvement on the original, particularly because of the effect tone of the Accordion and Solo Violin. I am pleased with the extra effects I put in, such as the dotted rhythm in the Cello part and some extra melodic notes in bars 11 and 20. It took me a while to decide how to share out the chord notes with the instruments I had chosen and how to divide up the melody between the Violin and Oboe. I am pleased with the contrasting effects I have managed to achieve. If I had more time I could probably make the piece longer, adding more ideas of my own.

Example 10 – CD Track 25

Title: Gigue for strings

Area of Study 3: Arrangement of a piece of dance music

(Recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Arrangement

The arrangement shows imagination and creativity in:

- *the distribution of the melody amongst the upper strings*
- *the Double Bass notes which enhance the 'Cello part without simply copying*
- *the addition of harmony notes to fill out the texture*
- *some additional part-writing in the final section, including parallel part-writing*
- *the extra bars with altered melodic shape (ascending scales)*
- *effects such as 'staccato' and 'pizzicato'*

Nevertheless without more original materials, this level of creativity can only access a mid-range mark.

8/15

Area of Study Criteria

In this arrangement, the candidate has maintained to spirit of the Gigue, but has not added to it. This limits the mark that can be awarded. Since the spirit of the dance is maintained, it is worth more than one mark.

2/5

TOTAL 10/20

Log and Evaluation

The Log and Evaluation clearly sets out the musical decisions made as the work progressed. There is clarity about the brief in terms of what the candidate intends to do and why. The candidate is able to explain the elements of creativity within the exercise. There is an understanding of the aural and notated outcome

8/10

Arrangement: Gigue for Strings

Brief, log and evaluation

I am going to use a piano piece called 'Gigue' by Samuel Arnold. I chose this idea because I enjoy listening to Jigs. This piece has only one note in each hand so I can adapt it and add my own ideas. I will use a String Quartet and split up the phrases of the piano music, giving each instrument something to play in turn. The piano piece has two repeated sections. I will write these out in full (using Sibelius) making alterations and additions on the repeats

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
02/3/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have set out the score for the usual String Quartet instruments of Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola and 'Cello • I have started putting in the notes of the melody • I am trying to put each bar of the melody with a different instrument, but it doesn't work and I'm stuck • I decided to work on the Bass line for a bit, adding the given notes to the 'Cello part 	Teacher suggested including additional instruments to the standard String Quartet as a way of solving the problem of distributing the melody line amongst different players
09/03/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give me more choices for where to put each part of the tune I have decided to add some more instruments: Violin 3 and Double Bass. Now I can spread out the tune in each part and use the Bass part to add emphasis to the 'Cello • I am continuing to work on the first half of the piece, experimenting with putting each bar of the melody in a different part 	Discussions re. part-writing and 'dove-tailing' of ideas
16/03/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have added a few extra notes in the first section – some of them are to get the parts to overlap as they take over from each other; some extra notes are to fill out the texture on the repeat (bar 9 Viola) • I have added 'staccato' marks to make it sound more lively and 'pizzicato' in the 'cello and bass parts. I thought about making all the parts pizzicato, but when I listened to it I liked it as it was • I have also started putting in the notes for the second section – because the ideas are similar to the first section I am finding it much quicker 	Further discussion re. overall structure and balance of sections
23/03/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have completed the second section. • Again I have thought of ways of adding a few extra notes to fill out the texture – especially on the repeat to make it louder • I also felt that when it got to the end I would like to have heard the last bit again, so I repeated the last 4 bars • This time I changed the top 2 violin parts to make them do a scale going up – I think it sounds really good • Finally I went through the piece putting in the dynamics – most of them are the same as in the original – because all my repeated sections are written out in full I had to be careful about where to put the markings – I found it a bit confusing at times and made some mistakes at first • I am adding a crescendo at the end 	Discussion re. balance of individual parts

Evaluation of the piece:

I am pleased with this arrangement and I think that it has given the original piece more character. The addition of extra parts has given more flexibility in splitting up the tune and in being able to add extra notes to fill out the texture. I think the pizzicato cello and bass works well, and the fact that I haven't over-used the double bass as that would have made the piece too heavy. I also like the fact that I repeated the last four bars and made it sound more like a complete ending

Example 11 – CD Track 26

Title: Funeral Arrangement of Country Dance

Area of Study 4: Arrangement of a piece to convey a different mood.

(Recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Arrangement

This piece has been created using the Cubase software programme. The candidate has written their piece for a string quartet. The candidate has used a mixture of both playing in and 'putting in' techniques.

The original piece was called Country Dance and was bright and lively, in G major and in compound time. The candidate has changed the mood to that of a funeral and made the piece slow and mournful, in simple time and in G minor. The different mood is conveyed well and although the piece is quite simple it is definitely different and in this respect quite successful.

Core Criteria

The mark for the core criteria would be on the cusp of the 6-8 and 9-11 bands. The piece has a sense of style that is suitable to the mood that it is intended to convey. It moves quite a long way from the original material and the new materials have been placed in a well defined and appropriate ternary structure. There is use, if a little limited, of creative input and there is some balance within the piece of unity and variety. The use of pizzicato in the middle section, a new tune and a major key help to give variety and the repeated outer sections give the unity.

9/15

The piece conveys the new mood well. It shows an understanding of what might be required to produce a funeral like style, using suitable features such as a slow speed, minor key, instrumentation that is appropriate, a rather homophonic texture and a static style melody. The piece is not imaginative enough to get full marks here.

4/5

TOTAL: 13/20

Log and Evaluation

The intent is clear and shows some features that would be used to portray this, but it lacks any detail. The candidate writes a brief outline of the progress made each week but does not think through the decisions made. The evaluation is rather limited and comes to a rather simple conclusion about the effectiveness of the piece.

4/10

TOTAL 17/30

Arrangement: Funeral arrangement of Country Dance

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I have chosen a piece to arrange called Country Dance. The original piece is for the piano. It is fast, in 6/8, in G major with 3 sections. I am going to arrange it in a funeral style. Therefore it will be slow, in 4 beats in a bar, in a minor key but I think it will still have 3 sections. I will write it for a string quartet.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
8/9/08	I have made it chordal at the start. I chose G minor for the key.	
15/9/08	I have put in some more of my first section.	
22/9/08	I have done a bit more today and I have nearly finished the first section. I have decided to repeat the first 8 bars again and end it differently.	
29/9/08	I have started my middle section today. This is in D major. I have used the same sort of key structure as the original piece but I thought that this bit should be in a major key and not stay in a minor key.	
6/10/08	I have done some more to my middle section today.	
13/9/08	I have decided to make some of the accompaniment to this bit plucked. It will give a bit of variety.	
2/11/08	I have finished my middle section.	
10/11/08	I have decided to put my A section on again so I have cut and pasted it.	My teacher said I needed to think about the end.
17/11/08	I listened to my piece. It is ok but I will change the chords at the end so that it ends in G minor.	
1/12/08	I have checked my piece and can't think of anything else that I could do to improve it so I will leave it now.	

Evaluation of the piece:

Whilst I think my piece works quite well it is a bit boring. I guess a funeral is not happy so it is all right for that. Everything seems to work well together and it sounds fine. I like the bit with the plucking and the middle section is better than the first and last section. I wish I had chosen a different piece but it was too late to start again so I have had to finish it. Hopefully it will get a good mark.

Example 12 – CD Track 27

Title: Lullaby gone wrong

Area of Study 4: Arrangement of a piece to convey a different mood.

(Recorded and written)

Examiner's Commentary

Arrangement

The candidate has written the piece for a 'pop' band using the Cubase software programme. The candidate has used a mixture of both playing in and 'putting in' techniques.

The original piece was called Lullaby and although the mood is changed, the outcome is not an upbeat pop song!

Core Criteria

The piece is coherent in a very simple way. The music has been based upon the original piece namely the first part of bars 2 and 6. The materials are not developed because the chords are static and the melody has only a narrow range and lacks interest in terms of rhythm. The structure is quite clear although the third section is a straight copy of the first section. Overall the piece just achieves the 6-8 band.

6/15

Area of Study Criteria

The piece is not very imaginative. The candidate attempts to change the mood but writes a piece that has just a simple beat and single repetitive chords. The melody is limited. There is therefore only an attempt to create the mood defined by the brief.

2/5

TOTAL: 8/20

Log and Evaluation

The log and evaluation would only be in the 1-2 band. There is a very simple intent but very little detail is given. The candidate makes statements about the process but again gives very little detail and shows little understanding. The judgement of the outcome is very basic.

2/10

Arrangement: Lullaby gone wrong

Brief, log and evaluation

Brief

I have got a piece called Lullaby and I am going to make it into an upbeat pop song. I am going to use a drum kit, bass guitar and some synthesised sounds to produce my piece so that it will sound really different to the original piece which was for the piano.

Log

Date	Progress	Notes (including advice given/targets)
8/9/08	I have written a bit for the drum kit which I think is ok. I will cut and paste it next week.	
15/9/08	I have repeated my drum kit part quite a lot of times and I have started the introduction.	
22/9/08	I have decided to introduce the instruments one at a time. The drum kit, then the bass guitar, then the keyboard and then the tune. I think this works quite well.	
29/9/08	I have spent some time on the tune today. I have based it on the first bar of the lullaby piece and then I have carried on trying to make the tune sound different.	My teacher told me to think about the phrases for my tune and to look at some of the notes we did at the beginning of term
6/10/08	I have written 12 bars of tune.	
13/9/08	I want to a different section now so I will use the chord of the second part of lullaby to base it on.	
2/11/08	I have started to write the new tune.	
10/11/08	I have finished the new tune this week.	
17/11/08	I am going to repeat the first section so that the piece is in ternary form. I have put an extra chord on to finish my piece.	
1/12/08	I have added a couple of drum fills to make it a bit more interesting.	

Evaluation of the piece:

I think it is ok. There are some things that I like about it – I think the drum kit works really well but it is a bit boring. I'm not very good at composing so it does not really sound the way I want it to. Perhaps I should have changed the sounds and the drum kit rhythm. Most of the time I cut and pasted the parts except for the tune.

Unit B351 – Commentaries

Example 1

Instrument: Clarinet

Title of piece: Minuetto

Composer: Arranged from Mozart

Examiner's Commentary

Notes:

This is longer than the suggested word length but as most of the information is relevant, this is not an issue at all. It would have been unhelpful to the candidate if the teacher had told him to cut it down. This is a well articulated, focused commentary with accurate use of technical language. The writer shows understanding of the background, the purpose and appropriateness of the arrangement, and explains the use and impact of a number of techniques. He knows why some things went wrong in performance, and has a number of ideas from the piece which carry forward into the compositional brief.

Assessment:

This fully meets everything required of the 6-8 band and because of its detail and the level of understanding shown, just edges into the top band and can be awarded 9. The second paragraph in particular shows a high level of musical understanding at GCSE level. The third paragraph is less detailed, and the last paragraph could have contained more points specific to the clarinet.
9/10

Music
OCR GCSE Unit B351
Commentary

Centre Number	<input type="text"/>	Centre	<input type="text"/>
Candidate	<input type="text"/>	Candidate	<input type="text"/>

Instrument: Clarinet	Title of piece: Minuetto	Composer: Arr. From Mozart
------------------------------------	--	--

Explain the purpose of the piece, why your instrument is used in it, and the role that your instrument plays in the piece.

The Classical period precedes the Romantic period and follows the Baroque period. During the Classical period, the clarinet became part of the standard orchestra. Mozart (1756 – 1791) was renowned in the classical era and was keen on the clarinet, including it in the orchestra, and writing a concerto and pieces of chamber music featuring it. My solo piece Minuetto was not originally composed for clarinet and has been arranged for clarinet and piano for people of my standard to play. The arrangement has the clarinet playing the tune, and the piano playing an accompanying part. Melody and accompaniment is a typical feature of classical music, and Mozart’s music suits the clarinet well.

Describe the techniques that you used to perform/realise the piece, commenting if you can on their effect on the music.

The piece uses a wide range of notes. The clarinet can sound sad and unhappy in its lowest range and because this is a minuet (originally a stately dance) it does not use this range. The first section is in the middle range, suiting a neutral mood, and the middle section is higher and the clarinet’s bright tone in the upper range makes the piece sound more vibrant and ecstatic. There are a lot of scales in the clarinet part, and, except where it crosses the break, this makes it relatively easy to play because it involves very simple movement of fingers – the only problem as they are so easy is not rushing them. The scales help to give the piece fluidity. There are a lot of contrasts in dynamics in the piece requiring good breath control. Often crescendos are used when the pitch increases and this emphasises the climb. The player has to be sure not to get too loud too quickly, and again good breath control is important. Lastly, sometimes the clarinet has a long note, and this allows the piano to play something more interesting underneath, giving the piece some extra interest through contrast of timbre. The clarinetist has to breathe deeply from the diaphragm to support the note in keeping it in tune. The note also needs some colour, so dynamics again have to be used so that it does not sound dead and uninteresting.

Describe how the performance went, mentioning any particular strengths and areas that could have been improved.

My performance went quite well. I managed to play most if not all of the dynamics required to achieve a good standard but I had a few small pitch mistakes where I either wasn't blowing hard enough down the clarinet to achieve the note, or I was playing the wrong note. This only happened for one or two small instances but it is quite noticeable. I kept well with the piano and we listened to each other to stay in time, and to make sure the dynamics were right.

Write a brief for a composition, drawing on what you have learned from the study of your piece.

I am going to write a classical piece for clarinet and piano. I will use 4/4 time as it is a commonly used time signature in classical music and I am not intending to write a dance. To make it easy to play and to make it flow, I will use scales a lot in the clarinet part and I will use dynamics to add colour using crescendos on the upward scales and diminuendos on the downward ones. My piece will have sections in the form A-B-A-C-A-B-A. I will have an introduction for the piano and the clarinet will play the melody in each section. I will use the upper register in the B section and the darker lower register in the C section.

Example 2

Instrument: Voice

Title: Lady Sings the Blues

Composer: Nicholas

Examiner's Commentary

Notes:

The commentary is about the right length. There is evidence that the candidate knows the purpose of blues songs, and the role of the vocalist in drawing out the mood. The whole commentary focuses on what needs to be addressed often on a simple level. There is understanding of the impact of techniques, although these are not explored in any great depth.

Assessment:

There is enough evidence of understanding to bring this into the 6-8 band and therefore a mark of 7 is appropriate. There are occasional spelling inaccuracies although overall the piece is grammatically well constructed.

Centre Number

Centre

Candidate

Candidate

Instrument:

Voice

Title of piece:

Lady Sings the Blues

Composer:

Nicholas

Explain the purpose of the piece, why your instrument is used in it, and the role that your instrument plays in the piece.

The original blues style of my piece comes from the use of the blues scale, sung notes, swing rhythms and some syncopated rhythms. The words became regular and the accompaniment from a piano fits the improvised style of blues. The song is about someone overcoming their troubles as blues songs were. The music and singing has to convey a lot of emotion and in this song the sense of sadness is conveyed through the use of G minor. It is the singer's job to bring the mood out, using the tone of their voice and placing emphasis on key words. There is no fixed speed in blues as it can be altered to fit how the singer and pianist think it ought to be performed.

Describe the techniques that you used to perform/realise the piece, commenting if you can on their effect on the music.

With blues originating from the USA I had to adopt an American accent for the piece. The piece fits with my voice as the highest note is a B, not a very high note and one which I can reach quite easily when I engage my stomach muscles. The song gave me opportunity to use the lower notes of my voice. For the word "Lady" I had to use my vocal chords and breathing to swing into the note. I had to put emphasis on the words which conveyed the emotion of the song, such as "bad". In the middle 8 I put emphasis on the words "ain't nothing" as I believe this fits the emotion of the song at this point which is the singer telling the audience that she will survive.

Describe how the performance went, mentioning any particular strengths and areas that could have been improved.

I was pleased with my final performance as a whole. I was concerned about keeping in time, but by taking breaths in the right places I was able to keep with the piano. I was pleased with my lowest and highest notes as these are those I worked hardest hitting, with the use of breathing and controlled stomach muscles these were less of a problem. I feel that my articulation could have been improved though and in future I would need to work harder on pronunciation. I feel that the performance was a success on the whole.

Write a brief for a composition, drawing on what you have learned from the study of your piece.

My intention is to compose a piece of music in the style of the blues. To put across the emotion and give my song musical features of blues I will be using swung rhythms, the blues scale and improvised words. The song will be a solo for a female voice, and I imagine it being performed by a woman telling her story to the audience. I will compose it in a low register to suit the mood of the words.

Example 3

Instrument: Clarinet

Title: Theme from Star Wars

Composer John Williams

Examiner's Commentary

Notes:

This is only a little under the right length but the content does not focus sufficiently on the clarinet in most sections. The first paragraph shows some understanding of the original purpose of the music and it is understandable that there might not be much about the instrument, when considering this sort of arrangement. However the opportunity to redress this in the second paragraph by exploring specific instrumental challenges is missed. A lot is taken up with the slur, which turns out to be a tie. The performance evaluation has some valid points and some unexplained points. The brief is a list of features of the piece, and there is no reason given for why they are going to be used.

Assessment

There are a few cause and effect statements ("because..." etc) but a lot of points made without explanation. The brief in particular is very secure in the 3-5 band. The accurate use of written English also supports a mark at the top of the band. Therefore this commentary merits a mark of 5.
5/10

Centre Number Centre Candidate Candidate **Instrument:**

Clarinet

Title of piece:

Theme from Star Wars

Composer:

John Williams

Explain the purpose of the piece, why your instrument is used in it, and the role that your instrument plays in the piece.

My piece is Star Wars by John Williams. Usually an ensemble of instruments would play. The genre is used to tell a bit of a story or to represent a character. This is why the music is important to the film. The tunes often come back a lot. My piece is the main theme from Star Wars composed in 1977. Because the tune has become famous it has been arranged a lot for different instruments. My piece is an arrangement for clarinet and piano.

Describe the techniques that you used to perform/realise the piece, commenting if you can on their effect on the music.

In the piece there is plenty of tonguing at the beginning of the piece, this is so it sounds like it is building up to something like a main event. At the end the loudness goes to *ff* this is the loudest I can play. There is one slur in the piece which is effective, it is placed 3 bars before the end of the piece. It is put here so that the dotted crotchet and the semibreve are one long note so that it builds up the tension before the final 3 notes.

Describe how the performance went, mentioning any particular strengths and areas that could have been improved.

Overall I think that I played the piece very well and I believe that I played the first 3 bars well because I got the timing right. I think that I could have played the last 4 bars better. I think that the dotted minim was too short but I think that the quavers in the last bar were played very well. In conclusion I found out that there were techniques that helped me to perform my piece: one of them was articulation in the pieces. There were plenty of diminuendos in all of the pieces: this helped me to play my pieces.

Write a brief for a composition, drawing on what you have learned from the study of your piece.

Some of the things I am going to do in my composition:

- 4/4 time
- Major key
- Some accidentals
- Fast rhythm
- Simple chord structure
- Some staccato notes
- Crescendos and diminuendos
- A moderato tempo

All these features are in my Star Wars piece. I will have a quiet beginning and a loud ending as this creates atmosphere.

Example 4

Instrument: Keyboard

Title: The Titanic

Composer: Horner

Examiner's Commentary

Notes:

Although short, there is positive achievement here as the writer sticks to the task and shows recognition of techniques. The first section is particularly thin whereas the third section makes an honest appraisal. The candidate has clearly been encouraged to think positively about his performance, as well as being able to identify weaknesses. Although the second section is very short it does focus on instrumental techniques whereas a lot of longer offerings do not. The composition brief ends purposefully. There are a number of basic spelling errors which might have been rectified by the use of a spell checker.

Assessment:

Everything here fits the 3-5 band: the lack of detail in the first section in particular counterbalances strengths in the third, and therefore a mark of 4 could be awarded.

4/10

Music

OCR GCSE Unit B351

Commentary

Centre Number

Centre

Candidate

Candidate

Instrument:

Keyboard

Title of piece:

The Titanic

Composer:

James Horner

Explain the purpose of the piece, why your instrument is used in it, and the role that your instrument plays in the piece.

For my solo performance I played the keyboard and the tune I chose to play was The Titanic by James Horner. The tune has become popular and has been arranged for lots of instruments, including the Keyboard.

Describe the techniques that you used to perform/realise the piece, commenting if you can on their effect on the music.

In my solo piece, my instrument uses two hands with a simple bass line in the left and a melody in the right. Other techniques it uses are hand position changes, moving fingers quickly and two hands together.

Describe how the performance went, mentioning any particular strengths and areas that could have been improved.

My solo performance went well as I practiced a lot and successfully played it all the way through with two hands after I had practiced a lot I became in control of my instrument allowing me to perform successfully. Although I thought my performance was a success and I executed it well there was room for improvement in my timing and use of dynamics.

Write a brief for a composition, drawing on what you have learned from the study of your piece.

I want to compose a piece of music that is influenced by my solo performance. It will be on the keyboard and it will demonstrate similar instrumental techniques and elements of my solo performance. It will have a simple melody as in Titanic, using repetition. It will have a chordal accompaniment throughout. It will be in Binary form consisting of two main ideas. Therefore it will be in the style of a popular music piece, catchy and using repetition.

Example 5

Instrument: Voice

Title: River Lullaby

Composer: Amy Grant

Examiner's Commentary

Notes:

This is very short (less than half the expected length) and contains a lot of generalisations. It demonstrates understanding of some vocal techniques specific to the song and uses accurate technical language. The writer does not explore the context of the ballad style and says little about the impact of techniques used. The performance is not properly evaluated: although the judgement is accurate there is no attempt to describe any features that contributed to its success. The brief defines a purpose and states techniques to be used.

Assessment:

Whilst the work broadly matches the 3-5 band, the weaknesses in the first and third paragraphs mean that it should be placed at the bottom of the band on a mark of 3.

3/10

Music

OCR GCSE Unit B351

Commentary

Centre Number

Centre

Candidate

Candidate

Instrument:

Voice

Title of piece:

River Lullaby

Composer:

Amy Grant

Explain the purpose of the piece, why your instrument is used in it, and the role that your instrument plays in the piece.

For my performance I sang River Lullaby originally by Amy Grant. The piece is in a ballad type style and the voice is a soft trancey sound made by whispering and dragging out the words.

Describe the techniques that you used to perform/realise the piece, commenting if you can on their effect on the music.

There are several notable features in this piece for my voice - "Hush" is sung in a low-pitched voice whilst being whispered. "You" and "Dream" have vibration on them most of the time. On nearly every word at the end of each phrase the note is dragged out and a narrow vibrato is used.

Describe how the performance went, mentioning any particular strengths and areas that could have been improved.

Overall I was pleased with the end result. Even though it took a while to record, having to double check some notes, the song was a success.

Write a brief for a composition, drawing on what you have learned from the study of your piece.

I am going to write a song in the style of River Lullaby. The voices I am going to use are a mixture of Soprano and Alto. I will make my song gentle and flowing. I will feature important words: "strong" and "enough". I will sing my song in a gentle vocal timbre like Amy Grant's, using vibrato and dragging out the vowels "o" and "e".

Unit B353 – Creative Task

The examples are all based on the exemplar stimulus material provided by OCR.

Example 1 Rhythm (Written)

Rhythmic Phrase

Allegro

The musical score consists of four staves, each labeled 'Violin' with a measure number in the margin. The first staff (Violin) starts at measure 1, marked *mf*. The second staff (Violin, 7) starts at measure 7, marked *mp* and includes a *pizz.* instruction. The third staff (Violin, 13) starts at measure 13, marked *mf* and includes an *arco* instruction. The fourth staff (Violin, 18) starts at measure 18. The music is in 4/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Large curved lines above the staves indicate phrasing. Dynamics range from *mf* to *f*.

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The stimulus has been used effectively and ideas have been developed throughout the exercise. The candidate has created a melodic phrase which has good sense of shape and phrasing.
13/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

The piece uses the violin correctly with a range of performing techniques.
4/5

Quality of Communication

The piece is clearly written out with attention to a range of elements. There is however some lack of clarity over the articulation because of the big phrase marks.
7/10

TOTAL: 24/30

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The stimulus has been used accurately and ideas have been developed throughout the exercise. The candidate has created rhythmic ideas which have a sense of phrasing and structure. The limitations on composing for a single un-pitched instrument need to be reflected in the mark
7/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

This Creative Task makes limited use of the Drum Kit (snare only) but does have a range of performing techniques, including flams and both sticks together on the last note.
3/5

The technique of the candidate is limited and the slight hesitations affect the quality of communication. There is some unevenness in the playing.
4/10

TOTAL: 14/30

Example 3 Note Pattern (Written)

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The melody is well structured in clear 8 bar phrases. It is quite effective but not particularly stylish or imaginative. The melody contains some musical development and has a successful modulation albeit a little early on in the 32 bars.

11/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

The piece is written for the violin successfully with a good range of suitable articulation for the instrument.

4/5

Quality of Communication

The candidate has written the melody accurately and the score shows exactly what notes, rhythms and articulation are expected. A tempo is indicated and dynamics included, but these are simple and not particularly well thought out.

8/10

TOTAL: 23/30

Example 4 Note Pattern: CD Track 29

The candidate used Cubase to create the task and then performed it on her clarinet.

The melody is 32 bars long in clear 8 bar phrases. It has used the complete note pattern at the beginning with a 4/4 time signature. The rhythms used are mostly straightforward but the dotted rhythms help to add interest. The melody has 16 bars in the tonic key, has 8 bars in the relative minor and then returns to the tonic and the opening passage for the final 8 bars.

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The mark for quality of response is in the top band. The melody is memorable and effective with a good sense of style. The melody contains musical development and an excellent structure with a successful contrasting section in the relative minor.

15/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

The piece is written very well for the clarinet. Although the range is only a 10th it is in the middle of the instrument and so is very suitable, with articulation appropriate to the instrument also. It warrants full marks

5/5

Quality of Communication

The candidate performs the melody accurately with a good variety of dynamic expression and suitable articulation. A good tempo has been chosen that gives a lively, bright feel to the piece that communicates the intentions very well indeed.

10/10

TOTAL 30/30

Example 5 Melodic Phrase (Written)

Melodic Phrase

Lively

Flute *mf*

Violin I *mf*

Fl. 5

Vln. I

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The lower part has been written following exactly the rhythm of the given part. Whilst it is an accurate harmonisation, to gain a high mark it would need to contain more creativity and interest. The outcome is satisfactory but it is a relatively simple response in this style.

7/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 2)

The piece shows understanding of parts working together harmonically but opportunity for rhythmic interplay has been missed.

3/5

Quality of Communication

There is accuracy of pitch and rhythm and some other elements are incorporated. There is no clarity of the articulation required however.

7/10

TOTAL: 17/30

Example 6 Melodic Phrase: CD Track 30

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The stimulus has been used accurately. The candidate has created a lower part which complements the given melody and gives a successful harmonic addition. The modulation is well handled with F# added to the lower part.

12/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 2)

This Creative Task makes good use of the piano with some off-beat left hand notes and staccato playing. The parts work effectively together: there is interest in the bass part when the melody has longer notes.

4/5

Quality of Communication

The technique of the candidate is good, providing a confident quality of communication. The performance is just a little mechanical without any light and shade.

9/10

TOTAL: 25/30

Example 7 Chord Sequence (Written)

Chord Sequence

Moderato

Violin 1 *mp*

Violin 2 *mp*

Viola *mp*

Violoncello *mp*

8

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

13

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The response utilises the chord sequence well. There is development of ideas in the second section. The candidate has an understanding of harmonic part writing and there is some variety in the texture after bar 8. This approach to the creative task is a good lead in to A level, and whilst very craftsman like, there is less real creativity in this approach. Therefore the response is not placed in the top band of marks.

12/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 2)

There is good understanding of part writing demonstrated here, again not imaginative but effective in terms of spacing, and texture.

4/5

Quality of Communication

The response is accurate in terms of pitch and rhythm, and has a tempo and some dynamics. More could have been added here.

6/10

TOTAL: 22/30

Example 8 Chord Sequence: CD Track 31

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The stimulus has been used accurately and imaginatively. The candidate has added appropriate additional harmonies without losing sight of the original. Structurally it is a little unbalanced since it took a little too long before the melody was established.

12/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

The piano writing flows freely with a fairly wide range of notes and chord sequences, without being over imaginative

4/5

Quality of Communication

This is a musical performance with good use of rubato. The melody sings out well over the chords.

10/10

TOTAL: 26/30

Example 9 Words (Written)

The piece has been created to the given stimulus using Cubase software.

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The song has been written in a simple folk like style which is both effective and suitable for the words that have been given. The melody is interesting. There is good use of repetition and the chordal accompaniment is very successful. This is stylish, imaginative and memorable and for 45 minutes work it deserves full marks.

15/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

The piece uses the voice effectively and is very singable. There are rests to enable breaths and it explores the range well.

5/5

Quality of Communication

The performance directions are fully in keeping with the style of the piece. The candidate's intentions are completely clear and small omissions (such as slurs to indicate two notes to a syllable) are inconsequential given the level of other detail here. Also it should be noted that whilst some of score is cluttered, this does not stand in the way of a full understanding of the composer's intentions, and therefore is not penalised.

10/10

TOTAL: 30 /30

Example 10 Words: CD Track 32

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The song has been composed in a simple unaccompanied folk style which is quite effective and suited to the given words. There is a good phrase structure and the piece has a strong sense of style. The musical devices are managed well but there is not enough development to reach the top band.

11/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 1)

The piece uses the voice successfully although the whole is lacking a little in character.

4/5

Quality of Communication

The song is sung accurately in keeping with the style. A little more expression would be required for the very top mark.

9/10

TOTAL: 24/30

Example 11 Sequence of events: CD Track 33

This piece has been created to the given stimulus using Cubase software. The candidate has chosen a variety of instruments and has used some synthetic effects sounds such as ice rain and crystal.

At the beginning the piece has three solo instruments that represent the three figures. The music that these instruments play rises and so depicts them climbing the mountain path. The accompaniment to this is atmospheric and the patterns played create the cold and gradual descending of the mist. The solo instruments gradually get softer to indicate that they are less visible and then there is a cymbal crash where the figure appears. A passage with sustained notes that get louder follows to show that the figures are trying to get past. The accompanying patterns get louder to over shadow the figures. The solo instruments begin to get lower and as they give up and a final crash shows that their way is barred.

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The music is atmospheric with little use of traditional melody, rhythm or harmony. However, there is a clear indication that the stimulus has been used and that the response is suitable. It has some identifiable musical ideas. It is therefore a simple, appropriate response and attains the top of the 4-6 band.

6/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 4)

The piece conveys the story with some success showing some links to the sequence of events.

3/5

Quality of Communication

The mark for the quality of communication is higher. The candidate has clearly paid attention to the dynamics within the piece by the manipulation of the software programme. The atmospheric style of the piece and the compositional intention is clearly evident here.

7/10

TOTAL: 16 /30

Example 12 Sequence of events: CD Track 34

This piece has been created by the candidate to the given stimulus using just the piano. The piece begins loudly with rising chords that represent the three people. Some high patterns emerge representing the mist and an abrupt chord seems to suggest the figure appearing. The three people try to continue and the loud rumbles at the end show that the way is barred.

Examiner's Commentary

Quality of Response

The music shows little use of traditional melody, rhythm or harmony. The response is basic and loud with little musical shape. There is some indication that the stimulus has been used but it is very limited. There are a few identifiable musical ideas, although the ideas are very basic.

2/15

Area of Study Criteria (AoS 4)

The piece partly conveys the story but with limited success. There are some links to the sequence of events. The effects employed are basic.

2/5

Quality of Communication

It is hard to know whether the candidate is playing the intended pitches and rhythms. There is little in the way of dynamics but there is an attempt to create some atmosphere within the piece.

3/10

TOTAL 7/30

CD Track List

Track		Piece	Length
1	Unit B351	Performance 1 Berkeley: Flute	4.54
2	Unit B351	Performance 2 Strauss: Vocal	2.31
3	Unit B351	Performance 3 DJ Icey: Beatboxing	5.26
4	Unit B351	Performance 4 My Wifey: Rapping	2.22
5	Unit B351	Performance 5 Mancini: ICT	1.01
6	Unit B351	Performance 6 Anon: Trumpet	0.44
7	Unit B351	Performance 7 Speed Data: Drum Kit	0.55
8	Unit B352	Performance 1 and 2 Taking the Mick: Beatboxing and Rapping	1.38
9	Unit B352	Performance 3 Teenage Dirtbag: Multi-tracked	4.44
10	Unit B352	Performance 4 Jig: Violin	2.14
11	Unit B352	Performance 5 The Tweets: Keyboard	0.30
12	Unit B351	Composition 1 The Rose Sonata: Piano	2.41
13	Unit B351	Composition 2 Waltz: Piano	2.45
14	Unit B351	Composition 3 Pluto: Viola and Piano	1.55
15	Unit B351	Composition 4 Simple Piece: Trumpet and Piano	1.26
16	Unit B352	Composition 1 Twosome	1.22
17	Unit B352	Composition 2 Indian Composition	2.47
18	Unit B352	Composition 3 Dolly's Waltz	1.57
19	Unit B352	Composition 4 Reeling about	0.58
20	Unit B352	Composition 5 The toys	2.00
21	Unit B352	Composition 6 The Weather	1.29
22	Unit B352	Composition 7 Sticky Toffee: Arrangement 1	0.43
23	Unit B352	Composition 8 Sticky Toffee: Arrangement 2	1.42
24	Unit B352	Composition 9 Tango: Arrangement	1.00
25	Unit B352	Composition 10 Gigue: Arrangement	0.58
26	Unit B352	Composition 11 Funeral: Arrangement	1.47
27	Unit B352	Composition 12 Lullaby: Arrangement	1.58
28	Unit B353	Example 2 Rhythm	0.38
29	Unit B353	Example 4 Note Pattern	0.50
30	Unit B353	Example 6 Melodic Phrase	0.19
31	Unit B353	Example 8 Chords	1.38
32	Unit B353	Example 10 Words	0.25
33	Unit B353	Example 11 Descriptive	0.33
34	Unit B353	Example 12 Descriptive	0.49