

GCSE (9–1)

Examiners' report

MUSIC

J536

For first teaching in 2016

J536/05 Summer 2022 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate responses is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 5 series overview

There was clear evidence of good teaching and well-practised examination technique within the scripts viewed by the examiners in this series, particularly from high and middle ability candidates. Where marks were very low, this was often because candidates left questions blank and so could not gain any marks. It is always better for candidates to attempt an answer than leave it blank.

It appeared that candidates engaged well with the musical excerpts, especially with the music from Questions 3, 4 and 6. Responses often showed confidence when writing about the music and the features that the extracts contained. It was good to see the use of appropriate musical terminology particularly within Question 3 and 6.

Some candidates were hampered by their lack of knowledge of musical elements and by weaker aural skills. This was highlighted from candidates who struggled to aurally recognise instruments, tonality, time signatures and ornaments. All of these aspects of music require continual practice and need to be addressed throughout the course.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listened to and then read the questions carefully • listened to the specific extracts of music and wrote about them • used appropriate musical language • were able to understand musical terms such as dynamics and tempo • answered questions concisely and with musical focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrote about the things that they had learnt rather than the things that they heard within the music • muddled the genres in Area of Study 3 – Rhythms of the World • did not understand the terms for the elements of music • misuse of words such as ostinato.

Question 1 (a)

1 This question is based on Area of Study 3 – Rhythms of the World.

You will hear this extract played **three** times.

(a) What style is this extract? [1]

The majority of candidates gained a mark for the correct response of 'Bhangra'. The most popular incorrect response was Indian Classical Music which is the other genre within this geographical area.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Give **four** features of the music that are typical of the **traditional** folk style.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 [4]

Those who correctly identified that this extract was Bhangra were able to go on to give correct features of the music such as 'Dhol' drum, 'Chaal' rhythm, melody played by the 'Sitar' and that there was a 'solo', 'male' vocalist. Other features credited were 'fast', 'accents on the off-beats', a 'narrow range' within the vocal and sitar melodies and that the language the extract was sung in was 'Phunjabi'. There were those who wrote about musical features found in Indian Classical Music such as Tala, Tabla, Raga which were not present in this music. Indian Classical Music and Bhangra have a few features that might be similar but the majority are very different. It is important that candidates hear a sufficient number of extracts of the various genres contained within Area of Study 3 – Rhythms of the World – so they are able to distinguish between them. There were also candidates who wrote about features of technology which was the focus of the next question, Question 1(c).

Assessment for learning

It was noticeable that many candidates wrote about the features they had learnt about Bhangra rather than just the ones that were heard in this specific extract. It is a good thing to be able to list features that might be found within a specific genre but it is another skill to listen to the actual extract and list features that were contained within it. There were a significant number of candidates who wrote about the backing singers and the shouts of Hoi which, although often a feature of Bhangra, were not present in this extract. Learning must be accompanied by specific listening in order to alleviate these errors.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Give **four** ways in which technology has been used in this extract.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

[4]

Many candidates of all abilities gained excellent marks in this question. Marks were most often gained for 'synthesiser', 'drum machine', 'echo or delay' and 'sampling'. Many candidates recognised the use of 'autotune' and 'reverb' on the voice. Other correct responses seen were linked to the production of the music, i.e. the use of 'microphones and speakers' or the use made of elements found within music software programs such as 'multitracking'.

Question 2 (a)

2 This question is based on Area of Study 2 – The Concerto Through Time.

You will hear an extract from a Romantic concerto played **three** times.

(a) Give the name of the solo instrument in this concerto.

..... [1]

A very high proportion of the entry gained a mark for 'piano' here.

Question 2 (b) (i)

(b) (i) Underline the name for the solo passage at the beginning of this extract.

Anacrusis Bridge Cadenza Coda

[1]

The correct response of 'cadenza' was underlined by the majority of candidates but all of the other responses were seen. candidates appear to have grasped the fact that the 'cadenza', as a structural feature, is an integral part of the Romantic Concerto.

Question 2 (b) (ii)

(ii) In the middle of the solo passage the orchestra plays a long, loud chord. Give **two** words or phrases that describe this chord.

1

2

[2]

Misconception



There were a significant number of candidates who simply repeated the words long, loud or chord as their responses to this question. Candidates will not be given credit for repeating words that occurred in the question. Nor was credit given for using words that meant the same as loud and long, for example forte or sustained. However there were many candidates who did gain credit with responses such as 'major', and 'accented' which were the correct responses seen most often. Other acceptable responses such as 'wide range', 'dramatic', 'dominant', 'seventh' and 'thick texture' were also seen.

Question 2 (b) (iii)

(iii) Give **three** features of the music played in the solo passage.

1

2

3

[3]

Some good responses were given to this question with many candidates hearing the 'virtuosic' nature of the cadenza along with other responses such as 'scalic' or 'stepwise', 'ornamented' or 'trills', 'legato' and 'wide pitch range'. Some candidates wrote words that were too general to gain credit from a passage of music like this, such as fast or loud. Focused listening is required to help candidates to write accurate responses with regard to specific features, such as tempo. The tempo in this extract was very flexible and so fast and slow, which were often seen, were not appropriate. More specific words needed to be used, for example, 'rubato' or 'free tempo' which are typical features of tempo within a cadenza style passage. Likewise, hearing and relating to specific detail within the dynamics, such as 'there is a diminuendo at the end', was required to gain credit. This passage from the extract is in a free style and so many overarching words will not be appropriate to describe the features heard.

Exemplar 1

1 *Virtuosic*

2 *Scalic*

3 *Very flexible tempo*

Assessment Objective 4

Question 3 is designed to test the candidates' analytical and evaluative skills as well as their ability to make critical judgements about music. When this question is based on Area of Study 4 – Film Music, the way that they link the music to the programme is part of the way that this is done. Therefore candidates who write responses that have no links to the programme have a restricted mark. Likewise candidates who do not write in prose and whose written English is weak will not have access to the full range of marks.

The mark scheme (on the left hand side) for this question is very comprehensive and it is not expected that candidates will be able to write about the music in this much detail. The mark scheme is to show what the music contains and the levels of response (on the righthand side) are used to judge whether a response shows a 'wide range of points', 'several points' or a 'limited number of points'. That, alongside the supporting links from the programme, the chronology and the use of spelling punctuation and grammar are all taken into account when awarding a mark. It is important therefore, that candidates practise this type of question in order for them to prepare the best way to deal with each aspect of the response within the time allowed.

Question 4 (a), (b) and (c)

4 This question is based on Area of Study 5 – Conventions of Pop.

You will hear this extract played **three** times.

- (a) How many beats are there in a bar? [1]
- (b) In what year might this song have been written? [1]
- (c) Suggest the name of an artist or group who might have performed this song.
..... [1]

Parts (a), (b) and (c) of this question were very well answered. The vast majority of candidates were able to recognise that there were '4' beats in a bar. Most were also able to identify a correct date or decade, which was accepted. Again the majority of candidates were able to give a Rock 'n Roll artist of which 'Elvis Presley' was the most popular choice.

Question 4 (d)

(d) Give **five** features of the music that are typical of this pop style. (Credit will not be given for repeating answers given above.)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

[5]

There were a considerable number of responses that were acceptable. Most candidates were able to score at least 1 mark; even generally lower scoring candidates who were able to gain more on this question. 'fast', 'major' and 'loud' were seen often as were the instruments of 'piano', 'double bass' and 'drum kit'. Some responses only referred to drums which was not specific enough to gain credit, nor were comments on just the lyrics. Features of the structure and style of the music were also seen within many scripts giving answers such as '12 Bar Blues', 'Boogie Woogie', 'Walking Bass' and 'verse/chorus'. There were some features of Rock 'n Roll that were not present in this extract such as loud, shouty voices and guitars.

Once again it is important to note that candidates must listen to the extract played to judge whether certain features are present in the music or not. Just writing a list of expected features will not necessarily gain any credit if those features are not in the extract.

Question 5 (a)

5 This question is based on Area of Study 2 – The Concerto Through Time.

You will hear an extract from a concerto by Mozart played **four** times.

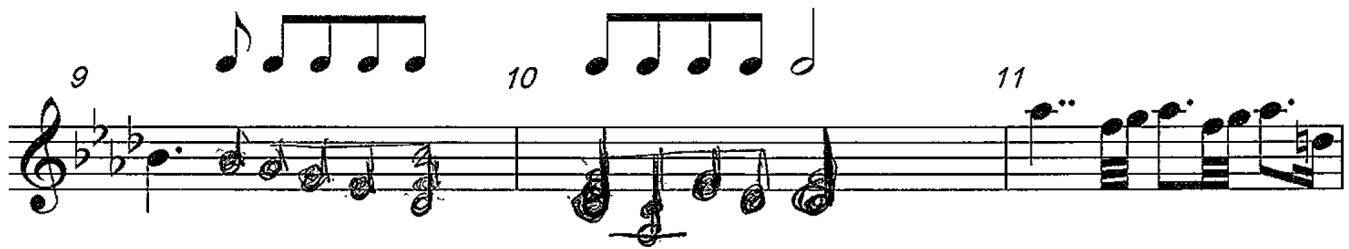
A single stave score of the main melody is printed opposite.

(a) Using the given rhythm, fill in the missing notes in bars 9 and 10. (There is no need to write anything in bars 13 and 14.)

[7]

The scalar nature of this melody made it quite accessible for many candidates. Candidates of a wide ability range were able to recognise that the first five notes descended in pitch. A higher than usual proportion of candidates were able to gain 6 out of 7 marks with only the interval of a fourth between the second and third notes in bar 10 causing problems. With this in mind the practice of interval recognition is key to being able to access this question successfully. Very weak responses often scored a mark for a correct note or shape but were not able to notate the music with any degree of security. There was one note that required a leger line, middle C, and this line was often missing which resulted in the note being marked as incorrect. It is important for candidates to practise writing notation as a general exercise so that when practising this question they know how to form the basic notes on the stave.

Exemplar 3



Exemplar 3 shows a 6 mark response. However, it is also an example of a candidate who has written in pen and made it quite difficult for the examiner to decide what was really intended. It seems quite clear that a descending run was intended and so this candidate has been given the 'benefit of the doubt' regarding some of the notation.

General advice - write in pencil and use a rubber

While most of the examination will be written in pen it is very important that this question is completed in pencil so that the response is legible. Candidates sometimes write in pen and then cross out responses which can make them difficult to decipher. Others use a very thick pencil and draw notes that go over two lines or spaces making the precise note intended impossible to know. candidates should be careful when they rub out notes and replace them because it is not always easy to see what is rubbed out and what is not on a scanned response paper.

Question 5 (b) (i)

(b) (i) What is the tonality of this extract? [1]

The majority of candidates wrote the correct response of 'major'.

Question 5 (b) (ii)

(ii) By the end of the extract the music has modulated. Tick the box next to the statement which describes this modulation.

- To the dominant
- To the relative major
- To the relative minor
- To the subdominant

[1]

Having written major as the response for (b)(i) it was surprising to see the number of candidates who opted for relative major in this part of the question. Where this style of question is linked it is important for candidates to follow through their thinking so as not to tick something that is impossible. If the extract is major then all of the responses apart from relative major are options and the extract modulated to the 'dominant' was the correct response.

Question 5 (c)

(c) Give **two** words that describe the timbre of the solo instrument.

1

2

[2]

Assessment Objective 3 – Applying knowledge of musical elements

As with Question 2(c), this is a question that focuses on an element of music, in this case Timbre. This is an area of music that candidates find quite challenging but it is an area that should be understood. Many candidates wrote words that were totally inappropriate and referred to other elements of music such as fast, repetitive, scalic and long. While Timbre might be a challenging aspect of music to focus on knowing what sort of words might be appropriate is the first step to being able to answer the question successfully. There were those candidates who gained the full 2 marks here with words like 'warm', 'mellow' and 'rich' which showed discerning listening skills.

Question 5 (d)

(d) Describe how the solo instrument and the orchestra work together in this extract.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

The most important feature of a successful response when answering a question asking how parts works together is to refer to both of those parts i.e. the solo and the orchestra. Responses such as 'the horn is high' or the orchestra plays chords is not acceptable unless linked with the other part of the ensemble. 'The orchestra accompanies the solo instrument' is an answer worth 1 mark. 'The orchestra plays chords while the solo is playing' explains what the orchestra does while accompanying so would be worth 2 marks. The most popular correct responses were 'call and response', 'question and answer' or 'dialogue' referring to the way that the solo instrument and orchestra 'alternate'. Some candidates wrote that the orchestra imitated the horn which it did not. Candidates who listened to the extract or studied the score carefully noticed the fact that the 'horn and the orchestra had different melodies' within the 'dialogue' which was a feature that gained credit.

Below is a response that firstly made a statement that was too vague for credit. They then wrote a nicely worded response that illustrates the final point made above.

Exemplar 4

They compliment each other,
 playing different melodies in a call
 and response structure.

Assessment for learning

It is important for candidates to understand the ways in which the solo instrument and the orchestra might interact within a concerto. This may vary according to whether the music comes from the Baroque, Classical or Romantic periods but general principles will apply. Candidates need to learn how to apply this knowledge when listening to extracts that they haven't heard before in order to be able to answer a question such as this effectively.

Question 6 (a)

6 This question is based on Area of Study 5 – Conventions of Pop.

You will hear **two** extracts of the same pop ballad sung by different artists.

The introduction of Extract A followed by the introduction of Extract B will be played **three** times during which you should answer part (a).

Then the verse of Extract A followed by the verse of Extract B will be played **three** times during which you should answer part (b).

(a) Listen to the introductions of both extracts and decide whether each of the following statements is true or false. (Circle your choice.)

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| (i) Both extracts have a similar tempo. | True / False |
| (ii) There is an oboe in Extract A. | True / False |
| (iii) The melodies are the same in both extracts. | True / False |
| (iv) There is a harp glissando in both extracts. | True / False |
| (v) There are voices in both extracts. | True / False |
| (vi) There is a cymbal roll in Extract B. | True / False |

[6]

This question was generally well answered with few candidates gaining a mark lower than 2 out of 6 and many gaining 4 or more. The questions that were responded to incorrectly most often were parts (iv) and (vi).

Question 7 (a)

7 This question is based on Area of Study 4 – Film Music.

You will hear an extract from the end credits of the iconic film *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. The extract will be played **four** times.
A single stave score of the extract is printed opposite.

- (a) In the **vertical** box on the stave at the beginning of the extract write the time signature. [1]

Relatively few candidates were able to work out that the correct time signature was '6/8'. A good proportion of wrong responses were 3/4 which meant that they had identified the correct number of quavers in a bar but not how they were grouped.

Assessment Objective 3 – Applying knowledge of musical elements

Knowledge of both simple and compound time signatures is part of the specification and so it is important to study both the theoretical and practical applications of time signatures and as well as pulse, tempo and beats in a bar.

Question 7 (b) (i)

- (b) (i) In the box **above** bars 1 and 2 give the name of the instrument that plays the written melody. [1]

The correct recognition of instruments aurally continues to cause problems for many. A good proportion of the candidates did gain a mark for the correct recognition of 'trumpet' for part (b)(i), possibly because it was at the beginning. Thereafter responses were often wrong. The reason for this is twofold; firstly some candidates find following a melody line very difficult. It is indeed a challenging aspect of the specification and so needs considerable practice within the classroom. Secondly candidates find it difficult to identify instrumental sounds, for example the 'horn' of part (b)(ii). The other instruments to be recognised were clearly identified as melodic percussion and percussion but many candidates wrote answers such as violin or trumpet here which are not percussion instruments. Other candidates wrote instruments such as triangle for the melodic percussion instrument, which it is not. It is vital for candidates to listen to and read the questions and also to learn the instruments that are part of the various sections of the orchestra so that they do not make these errors. Able and middle ability candidates were often able to recognise the 'glockenspiel' as the instrument playing in bar 29, although many confused it with the xylophone, and a good proportion of candidates gained a mark for 'snare drum' at the end. There are still those candidates who write drum which is too vague to be worthy of credit in this type of question.

Question 7 (c)

- (c) Underline the value for the notes played by the horns in the accompaniment in bars 7 and 8 and bars 39 and 40. These bars are identified by a bracket on the score.

Crotchet Minim Quaver Semiquaver [1]

Relatively few candidates underlined the correct response of 'quaver'. With the time signature of 6/8 the crotchet and minim were not viable and so only quaver and semiquaver were left and careful listening should have resulted in the correct response.

Question 7 (d)

- (d) Give the bar number where a cymbal crash is heard. [1]

A good proportion of candidates heard that the cymbal crash occurred at the start of the main theme and wrote either '1' or '33' as their response. It appeared that some could not quite keep up with following the music on the score, getting a bit behind and so bars 32, and 31 were often seen.

Question 7 (e)

- (e) Suggest an overall dynamic for this extract. [1]

This was largely correct with 'forte' or 'loud' being seen most often.

Assessment Objective 3 – Applying knowledge of musical elements

Once again, the word dynamic was not understood by some candidates so inappropriate responses like fast and major were seen.

Question 7 (f)

(f) Give **three** features of the music that help to portray a successful mission in space. (Credit will not be given for just naming instruments or repeating answers given above.)

- 1
- 2
- 3

[3]

The majority of candidates scored at least 1 or 2 marks here. The responses most often credited were 'major', 'fanfare', 'thick texture' and 'fast'. Some candidates gained marks for recognising that the music had a 'triumphant' or 'heroic' quality. The question specifically stated that just naming instruments or repeating the information given earlier in the question would not be credited but there were responses seen that did just this.

Question 8 (a)

8 This question is based on Area of Study 3 – Rhythms of the World.

You will hear this extract played **three** times.

(a) From which country does this style originate? [1]

Most responses were correct with 'Greece'. There were however those candidates who wrote Israel or Palestine which were the other genres within this geographical area.

Question 8 (b)

(b) Underline the time signature of this extract.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| 4 | 4 | 8 | 8 |

[1]

'7/8' was most often given, with 5/8 being mistakenly given by those who recognised that there was an irregular metre but couldn't distinguish exactly what it was. There were those who didn't recognise this feature within the music and so underlined a simple time signature instead.

Question 8 (c)

(c) Underline the correct interval between the two main melody instruments.

Octaves

Unison

3rds

5ths

[1]

Good knowledge of the features found within Greek music should result in the interval of a '3rd' being the most expected response, however all of the alternatives were seen equally.

Question 8 (d)

(d) Give the name of **two** instruments that you can hear in this extract.

1

2

[2]

A good proportion of candidates gained at least 1 mark here. Correct responses most often seen were 'Bouzouki' and 'Doubek'. However other responses such as 'violin', 'clarinet', and 'guitar' were also seen. The incorrect response seen most often was Oud, presumably given because of the confusion between Greek and Arabic instruments.

Question 8 (e)

(e) Give **three** features of the melody that are typical of this style. (Credit will not be given for repeating answers given above.)

1

2

3

[3]

Many candidates heard the 'ornamental' nature to the melody with the use of 'slides' and/or 'microtones', and that there were many 'repeated phrases'. There was also recognition of the 'fast' tempo and use of 'fast notes' and that much of the movement was 'stepwise'. Some candidates did not focus on the question i.e. features of the melody, and wrote about features of the accompaniment which was not credit worthy.

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