

Examiners' report

GCSE

MUSIC

**OCR Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in
Music**

J536

For first teaching in 2016

J536/05 Summer 2025 series

Contents

Introduction	4
Paper 5 series overview	5
Question 1 (a)	6
Question 1 (b)	6
Question 1 (c)	7
Question 1 (d)	7
Question 1 (e)	8
Question 2 (a)	8
Question 2 (b) (i)	8
Question 2 (b) (ii)	9
Question 2 (c) (i)	9
Question 2 (c) (ii)	10
Question 3*	11
Question 4 (a)	12
Question 4 (b)	12
Question 4 (c)	13
Question 4 (d)	13
Question 5 (a)	14
Question 5 (b)	15
Question 5 (c)	16
Question 5 (d)	16
Question 6 (a) (i)	17
Question 6 (a) (ii)	17
Question 6 (b) (i)	17
Question 6 (b) (ii)	17
Question 6 (c)*	18
Question 7 (a)	20
Question 7 (b) (i), (ii) and (iv)	20
Question 7 (b) (iii)	21
Question 7 (c)	21
Question 7 (d)	21
Question 7 (e)	22
Question 8 (a)	22
Question 8 (b)	23

Question 8 (c)	23
Question 8 (d)	24

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 [Teach Cambridge](#).

Would you prefer a Word version?

Did you know that you can save this PDF as a Word file using Acrobat Professional?

Simply click on **File > Export to** and select **Microsoft Word**

(If you have opened this PDF in your browser you will need to save it first. Simply right click anywhere on the page and select **Save as . . .** to save the PDF. Then open the PDF in Acrobat Professional.)

If you do not have access to Acrobat Professional there are a number of **free** applications available that will also convert PDF to Word (search for PDF to Word converter).

Paper 5 series overview

The paper appeared to contain some very popular extracts of music, particularly the last one of '*School's out for Summer*', which candidates seemed to engage with very well. The mark scheme shows that a wealth of responses were accepted for many of the questions within the paper, giving candidates a great deal of scope to do well. The paper showed very good differentiation and the marks given ranged from 0 to 79 showing a very wide range of accessibility.

There were still some candidates who relied on their knowledge of the styles to answer questions rather than focusing on the music of the extract. This was particularly evident in Question 4. There were also many candidates who heard music that was quite ornate but just wrote 'trills' (which in Questions 1 and 2 was not creditworthy). There were also several instances where the candidate used terminology that was close but ultimately incorrect, and therefore could not be given credit. The most common example was the use of 'sequencing' instead of the correct term 'sequences', as often seen in Questions 1, 2, and 4.

There appeared to be a better understanding of some of the terminology used in this year's paper. Tonality led candidates to write appropriate responses even if they were not always correct i.e. major instead of minor. Tempo was also generally well understood by most candidates but cadence and metre were less well known. Cadence produced a variety of inappropriate responses such as high, fast, 4/4, and metre was often ignored in Question 2 (c) (ii) with candidates only writing about tempo.

The lack of aural awareness of the timbres of orchestral instruments is still quite apparent. Candidates often wrote about incorrect instruments in Question 3 and also in Question 7 (b). Their knowledge and aural awareness of instruments from Area of Study 3, however, is often much better.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- listened to and read the questions carefully - did not repeat responses - focused on the specific question i.e. wrote about the melody only when that was required - listened to the extracts and wrote about them rather than their knowledge of the style - wrote concise response - gave clear responses - wrote clear notation, with the correct number of notes using well shaped noteheads - wrote the correct number of responses to each question.	- did not listen to or read the questions carefully - repeated answers - wrote responses that included things not directly related to the question - did not listen to extracts carefully and wrote about pre-learnt information - wrote unfocussed responses - wrote vague imprecise responses - wrote notation that was imprecise, sometimes with too many notes and very large noteheads - wrote far too many responses to a question with a set number of answers required.

Question 1 (a)

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

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

(a) Name the period of composition for this extract.

..... [1]

Most candidates correctly wrote 'Romantic' as the answer for this question. There were those who wrote 'Classica' and a few 'Baroque' but many candidates heard the features in the music that led them to the correct period. There were still a few who wrote dates, which has not been an acceptable response for this type of question throughout the life of this specification.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Describe the music of the introduction (before the piano enters).

.....
.....
.....
..... [3]

This question referred to only 4 bars of music at the beginning of the extract and this was clearly helpful because very few candidates gained no credit at all for their answer. Many candidates gained all 3 marks for answers such as 'timpani', 'roll', 'brass/trumpet' and 'crescendo'. There were those who wrote drum which was not given a mark. There are hundreds of different types of drum and in this type of question the name of a specific drum is required. 'Timpani roll' therefore gained 2 marks, but drum 'roll' gained only 1 mark.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Give **three** features of the music played by the piano.

- 1
- 2
- 3

[3]

There was a wealth of responses available in answering this question and some good responses were given. Answers such as 'rubato', 'solo', 'scalic', 'chords' and 'loud' were seen often but many also heard that the chords were 'broken', that the playing was 'virtuosic' and that there were 'repeated phrases'. Some candidates did not read or listen to the question carefully enough and incorrectly wrote about the orchestra rather than the piano.

(d) Give **three** features of the music played by the orchestra **after** the introduction.

- 1
- 2
- 3

[3]

Question 1 (d)

Many candidates recognised the 'thick texture' of a Romantic orchestra, the role of the orchestra in 'accompanying the piano' and the generally 'loud' dynamic. Some wrote about the call and response nature of the music which was not present in this extract. There were a number of occasions in this paper when candidates wrote about features they thought should be there but did not listen to see if they actually were, and this was one such instance. There was some 'imitation' but not 'call and response'. Other features such as 'staccato', 'chromatic', and 'chords' were also popular answers. There were also some 'repeated melodic ideas' that occurred in this extract but there were a number of candidates who wrote 'ostinato' which was not an appropriate term for this music. Most candidates gained at least 1 mark here and many gained 2 or 3 marks.

Question 1 (e)

(e) Suggest a venue where this extract might be performed.

..... [1]

Many candidates gained the 1 mark for this question. Many candidates wrote 'stadium', 'theatre' or other venues where concerts might be performed and these were accepted, however, the most appropriate response was 'concert hall'. The venue needed to be a place that would accommodate a large orchestra and an audience therefore, a wedding or a ball, which were seen several times, were not accepted as they were not appropriate.

Question 2 (a)

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

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

(a) Suggest a country from where this music might originate.

..... [1]

Many candidates heard that the music was from 'Greece'. The most popular incorrect answers were Israel and Palestine.

Question 2 (b) (i)

(b)

(i) Name the instrument playing the **melody**.

..... [1]

The most popular response was the correct one of 'bouzouki', although 'guitar' was also often seen. Some linked their response with their incorrect observation of Israel/Palestine and wrote 'oud' which was not accepted. A few candidates were far too vague and wrote goblet shaped string instrument which again did not receive credit because the question asked for a name, not a description.

Question 2 (b) (ii)

- (ii) Give **three** features of the **melody** and/or the playing techniques that are typical of the style. Do **not** refer to metre or tempo in this answer.

1

2

3

[3]

Some excellent responses were seen for this question with correct points such as 'tremolo', 'picked', 'ornamented' and 'playing in thirds' being given regularly. These are common features of Greek instrumental music and they were indeed present in this extract. Other popular responses related to the repetitive nature of the melodic writing, although 'ostinato', once again, was not appropriate here, and others were able to identify some of the specific techniques required to play the melody such as 'palm muting' and 'hammer-ons'. Some candidates wrote about things that they thought should be present rather than listening carefully to what was actually in the music. 'Slides' was a common incorrect response. There were also those candidates who wrote the same thing in different ways which did not allow them to gain full marks. For example, 'fast notes' as answer one and 'quavers and semi-quavers' as answer three will only result in 1 mark being given.

Question 2 (c) (i)

(c)

- (i) How many beats are there in a bar at the beginning of this extract?

..... [1]

The responses here were quite mixed. The correct response of '3' was not seen as often as the incorrect response of '4'. Others opted for '5' or '7' which were acceptable in Question 2 (c) (ii) but not here where the metre was clearly in 3.

Question 2 (c) (ii)

(ii) Describe how the metre and tempo change during the rest of this extract.

.....

.....

.....

..... [3]

Very few candidates did not gain at least 1 mark here, mostly for correctly stating that the 'music got faster'. Many of these candidates went on to gain at least 1 other mark for more specific detail about how the music 'slowed down' and then 'got faster again'. In terms of metre, the fact that parts of the music were 'irregular' or that the extract ended in '2' or '4' was given by many for their 3rd mark. There were, however, also candidates who did not understand the terms 'tempo' or more particularly 'metre' and so they did not answer the question with the correct focus.

Misconception



While a lot of very good answers were seen to this question (see Exemplar 1) there were some candidates who did not refer to both 'metre' and 'tempo' and so could not access the full 3 marks.

Exemplar 1

it starts on $\frac{3}{4}$ at a moderate pace, then suddenly becomes much faster with an irregular time signature ~~with~~ of $\frac{5}{8}$. The piece ~~the~~ rts into a slow section then accel. into the final very fast section. The metre frequently changes. [3]

This response contains accurate reference to both 'metre' and 'tempo' as required by the question. Their first point refers to the initial time signature of $\frac{3}{4}$, which they had already gained credit for in Question 2 (c) (i) but they did give the tempo as 'moderate' which was correct. Accurate aspects of the music: 'getting much faster' and changed to an 'irregular' time signature gives them their full marks. They did go on to add yet another point which was accurate but could not gain any more marks.

Question 3*

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

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

This is an extract from a film soundtrack. The scene occurs when a steam train moves out from the station on a journey that is going to be filled with suspense.

Using your knowledge of this style write a paragraph, using sentences, explaining how the music conveys the scene. You may wish to refer to instruments, rhythm, melody, texture, tempo or any other features that are relevant to the context of the music.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [9]

The extract this year was from Area of Study 4. This meant that links between the scene and the music were required as well as a description of the music that was played. These links are not required for the other Areas of Study and so an extra element is added to the question when descriptive music is used. The music was from the 1974 film *Murder on the Orient Express* and was played for the scene near the beginning where the steam train was waiting to leave the station and then embarked on its journey. The music was in two clear sections, which many of the candidates heard and wrote about in varying levels of accuracy. At a basic level, candidates were able to hear the difference between the thin and thick texture, the slow and fast tempo and the soft and loud dynamics. Many candidates were able to identify some of the instruments at the beginning such as the timpani and low brass, trumpets or horns and later the snare drum and then flutes and glockenspiel. A mention of these more basic points allowed candidates to gain low-band marks and sometimes moved them into the middle-band. More secure and higher middle-band responses were able to add detail to what the instruments did i.e. played short phrases in a call and response pattern in the first half and the accelerando and 3/4, waltz rhythm of the second half. Many wrote about the sudden change with the bells, fast runs on the strings and the harp glissandi. Depending on the amount of detail given, a response might now begin to move into the top band. There were also many candidates who described the first section in impressive detail but then hardly mentioned the second section, which restricted their mark. Top band responses generally added more detailed observations about the use of dialogue and repetition of phrases, for example, how the trumpets played a phrase which was answered by an ascending scale and a bass clarinet played a descending phrase etc. Some very able responses recognised that the brass motif played at the beginning evolved into the waltz melody of the second half. Others also recognised the way the music here became faster and gave details of the um-cha-cha accompaniment and the answering phrases to the melody.

The quality of the links varied considerably. Many, particularly less high scoring responses, only repeated the word suspense from the question and added little to the information they were given about the scene. However, centres should be reminded that the links are very much secondary to the musical analysis and that links should not be overly repeated. Some candidates produced excellent narratives about the journey but at the cost of their musical points and therefore only scored in the bottom band. Others wrote a musical point and then linked it to their story all the way through their answer. This is not necessary. The mark scheme has a considerable amount of musical detail, far more than is required for full marks, but there are only a few links. This is the way responses should be presented.

The quality of written English was generally quite good and fewer candidates used bullet points than in the past. Chronology is also an important feature of a response particularly to gain a mark in the top band. Some answers were quite confusing to read because they kept switching from the first section of the extract to the second and then back again. Answers that flowed were in clear chronological order and showed far better understanding than those that were not. The preparation page can be used in various ways to plan an answer that is more likely to flow than one where candidates start writing in the answer space straight away.

Question 4 (a)

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

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

This is an extract from a Baroque concerto grosso.

(a) Name the keyboard instrument that is heard in this extract.

..... [1]

Most candidates gained a mark for the correct response of 'harpsichord'.

Question 4 (b)

(b) What is the tonality at the beginning of this extract?

..... [1]

It would appear that most candidates knew the meaning of the word 'tonality'. Some candidates correctly wrote 'minor', some wrote 'major'. It is important for centres to work at hearing the correct tonality in various styles of music. A few candidates referred to musical aspects such as 'tempo' showing a lack of awareness of the terminology.

Question 4 (c)

(c) Suggest a suitable composer for this extract.

..... [1]

Many suitable composers were seen for this response. The question told them it was from the Baroque period and most candidates wrote a Baroque composer, of which the most popular was 'Bach'.

Question 4 (d)

(d) Give **five** features of this extract that are typical of a Baroque concerto grosso. Do **not** repeat answers given above.

1

2

3

4

5

[5]

Some excellent responses were seen to this question. Many gained the full 5 marks with excellent responses, clearly related to this extract. However there were many which scored 4 rather than 5 because they included features that were not heard in this extract.

Correct responses seen regularly were 'continuo', 'strings', 'group of soloists/concertino', 'tutti', 'ornamented', and 'fast notes'. 'Small orchestra' was also seen frequently which was correct but there were those who wrote smaller orchestra which did not receive credit, as this led to the question smaller than what? Other answers that were not accepted included negative responses such as 'no piano'. As a general rule negative answers are not given because the mark scheme does not give marks for negative answers, rather it rewards the correct identification of what candidates hear. There were also a few candidates who wrote 'polyrhythmic' rather than the correct 'polyphonic'. Some candidates opted for more generic answers like 'fast' which was also not accepted, so just because this concerto grosso was fast doesn't mean that every concerto grosso is fast.

There were those candidates who repeated 'harpsichord', the answer from Question 4 (a) and gained no credit. Some however, did go on to explain the use of the harpsichord and cello together and gained credit for a description of the continuo.

Assessment for learning – Listen to the extract

It is vital for candidates to listen to the actual extract when answering any question on this paper. While learnt information is very important as Question 4 (c) shows, simply repeating answers that have been learnt about a period of composition or a specific style or genre can lead to incorrect responses being written. Candidates must listen to the specific extract to hear what features the music actually contains. Many candidates wrote terraced dynamics as a response to this question. This is often a feature of Baroque music but this extract did not contain any terraced dynamics and so this response could not be given marks. The question clearly asked for features from this extract, not for general knowledge about Baroque music. Teaching students to listen is essential in order to avoid this issue.

Question 5 (a)**5 This question is based on Area of Study 5 – Conventions of Pop.**

You will hear this extract from a pop ballad 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, 10 and 11.

[7]

Most candidates attempted this question and many made a very good attempt. There were three sets of ties in the 10 notes they were asked to notate and for some of the candidates this was helpful. They knew that notes tied together needed to be the same and even if the notes themselves were wrong they gained marks for shape. However there were those who did not understand this musical concept and so changed the second tied note and were therefore not able to gain credit.

Many candidates recognised that the first note was the same as the previous note and so were able to correctly gain credit for their first F. Many candidates gained marks for shape rather than correct notes. There is an exemplar 2 shows how it is possible to get very few accurate notes but because the shapes are correct the candidate can still score very well.

Some candidates wrote notes that were far too big making them very difficult to decipher. Other candidates wrote more than ten notes which made their answer more challenging to mark. Candidates, while not needing to write the stems of the notes, should place the notes under the given rhythm as this will help them to see more clearly what they need to do.

Exemplar 2

9 10 11

I took your love for gran - ted _____ thought luck was al - ways on.

In this exemplar, while the first and last notes are correct, the others are not. However all the shapes are correct and so there are 8 correct notes and/or shapes and so 6 marks are given.

Assessment for learning - Notation



It is very important for candidates to learn melodic dictation, but it is also good just to practise writing notation so that it is done neatly and clearly. It should be written in pencil so it can be rubbed out, not crossed out as is often seen when it is done in pen.

Question 5 (b)

(b) Name the cadence that occurs at the end of this extract.

..... [1]

This was a term that caused problems to many candidates. Some clearly knew the term and wrote the name of a cadence and all four cadences were seen, but only 'imperfect' was correct. Many responses referred to features other than cadences, such as 'minor', 'low', and 'fast'. It is important for candidates to learn terminology and appropriate responses to go with them. It is also important for them to listen to cadences, perhaps play cadences, and hear what they sound like so that they are able to apply this understanding to the music that they hear.

Question 5 (c)

(c) Tick the box next to the statement that describes the modulation at the end of this extract.

The extract ends in the dominant.

☐

The extract ends in the relative minor.

☐

The extract ends in the subdominant.

☐

The extract ends in the tonic.

☐

[1]

Candidates' responses covered all 4 options, with the correct answer of 'the extract ends in the relative minor' seen most often.

Question 5 (d)

(d) Give **three** features of this extract that are typical of a pop ballad. Do **not** repeat answers given above.

1

2

3

[3]

Most candidates gained marks here with responses such as 'sentimental lyrics', '4/4', 'slow', 'soft' and 'legato'. There were those who referred to a female artist which was not accepted because many pop ballads use male vocalists and so female is not typical of this genre. 'Melisma' was also regularly seen which is often heard in a pop ballad but it was not present in this one and so could not be given. The question has two facets requiring the answer to be both a feature of this extract and also typical of a pop ballad.

Question 6 (a) (i)

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

You will hear two extracts of the same style of music.

Extract A followed by **Extract B** will be played **four** times.

(a)

(i) Name the melody instrument in **Extract A**.

..... [1]

'Sitar', the correct response, was seen most often.

Question 6 (a) (ii)

(ii) Name the melody instrument in **Extract B**.

..... [1]

'Bansuri' was seen regularly, although there were many candidates who could not remember the name and wrote 'flute' which was also accepted.

Question 6 (b) (i)

(b)

(i) Name the note pattern used in this style of music.

..... [1]

Most candidates gained a mark for 'raga', although some candidates muddled the melodic and the rhythmic pattern and so received no marks for this or Question 6 (b) (ii).

Question 6 (b) (ii)

(ii) Name the rhythm pattern used in this style of music.

..... [1]

The correct response of 'tala' was seen regularly but 'chaal' was a frequent wrong response. A few candidates did not appear to recognise the style of music or had not learnt about its features and so were not able to provide the correct answer.

Question 6 (c)*

(c)* Using your knowledge of this style from Area of Study 3, write a paragraph, using sentences, comparing the similarities and/or differences of the extracts. You may wish to refer to melody, harmony, rhythmic features, tempo, metre, timbre, texture or any other features that are relevant to the context of the music. If you repeat answers, credit will only be given for additional detail.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [6]

As with most questions the full range of marks were seen. Very few candidates who attempted it did not score at least 1 mark. Most candidates recognised these extracts as Indian Classical Music and wrote appropriately. Some responses were quite basic containing only simple observations such as both were slow and had a thin texture, there was a drone played by a tampura and a tabla played the rhythm. While these responses were all true they were more generic in nature. Those responses that moved into the middle-band and above gave more detailed descriptions of the extracts heard.

The question gave instructions that answers could be repeated but only extra information would gain further credit. Despite this many candidates began their response by restating the melody instruments with no further detail, which is likely to have wasted valuable time. Others did give further information about the melodies played, for example the use of pitch bends, ornamentation, the timbre of the different instruments and the use of improvisation. Some noticed that there were two bansuris in Extract B.

Many candidates were able to hear that both extracts started with just melody and drone and that the tabla entered later. Some were able to explain that this may have been the Alap section and that the Gat started when the tabla entered and the music became more rhythmic and had a feel of 4/4 time.

Candidates who gained marks in the top band sometimes additionally referred to the different tempos at the beginning: that Extract A was slower and became faster whereas Extract B did not change. As well as this the tabla drums became more complex, particularly in Extract A.

Some candidates showed excellent aural awareness of the similarities, of which there were many, and some also heard the differences which were perhaps harder to articulate. Weaker responses often muddled which extracts were faster or slower and they also talked inappropriately about Western tonality.

As with Question 3, the quality of written English is considered when this response is marked. Organised answers that talk about the extracts together often fare better than answers that refer firstly to Extract A and then separately to Extract B. Exemplar 3 is an example of this approach, for the most part, and it gained full marks.

Exemplar 3

Both extracts begin with the melody instrument and the drone ^(2 part texture) being played by the ~~tampura~~ ^{have}. The beginning of both extracts ~~have~~ free and unmetred rhythm – no set tempo. The tempo of extract A very gradually accelerandos throughout, whereas the tempo of extract B begins to speed up slightly with the introduction of the tabla. The sitar in extract A has sympathetic strings which ~~allow it to~~ ^a create harmony to the main melody being played by the main strings. The ~~banuri~~ ^{flute} in extract B doesn't have this, however in both extracts, the melody instrument improvises on the Raga scale. The sitar has a much sharper and brighter timbre compared to the warm, breathy and wooden timbre. The ~~be~~ flute uses lots of ornamentation and so does the sitar, however the sitar ~~it~~ uses a lot of meends (pitch bends) whereas the flute plays a lot of trills and fast note passages. The tabla gradually enters in extract A, playing ~~a single~~ ^a few beats in small interjections before beginning to improvise on the tala. Although the tabla player also improvises and decorates the tala like ⁱⁿ extract A, in extract B, the tabla enters earlier on in the extract and begins to improvise as soon as it enters. Both extracts have a slight crescendo as the texture becomes a three-part texture, towards the end of the extracts. [6]

This exemplar clearly gives clear comparisons with some extra information from one or other of the extracts. Some of the comparisons are similarities with the phrase 'both extracts' being used often. There are some incorrect observations, i.e. Extract B speeds up, but these do not detract from the overall quality of the answer.

Question 7 (a)

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

You will hear an extract from a track called 'Theme of Love' from the video game Final Fantasy IV.

The extract will be played **four** times.

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

(a) Suggest a suitable tempo for this extract.

..... [1]

Correct and incorrect responses occurred in equal numbers. Some candidates gained a mark for 'slow', 'adagio', 'largo' or 'moderately slow'. Others opted for a tempo that was considered too fast, while others wrote 'time signatures', 'dynamics' or other features that were nothing to do with tempo.

Question 7 (b) (i), (ii) and (iv)

(b)

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

(ii) Another instrument joins the melody in bar 9. In the box **above** bars 9 and 10 write the name of this instrument. [1]

(iv) A third instrument joins the melody in bar 15. In the box **above** bars 15 and 16 write the name of this instrument. [1]

Candidates found the identification of the 'oboe' difficult and many opted for 'clarinet or flute'. The recognition of orchestral instruments is very important and there will always be questions like this on a paper. It appears that the instruments from the genres from the Rhythms of the World Area of Study are recognised more accurately than instruments from the orchestra.

More candidates gained a mark for the 'violin' which entered in bar 15 but the most correct answers were seen for the 'flute' entering in bar 9.

Quite a lot of questions were left blank and some wrote instruments that could not play the written melody such as the timpani or the double bass.

Question 7 (b) (iii)

(iii) This instrument does not play at the pitch written on the score. Underline the correct interval between the written pitch and the sounding pitch.

Octave above

Octave below

3rd above

5th above

[1]

This question asked for the interval between the first and second instruments that played. It appeared that some candidates were confused as to whether it was an 'octave above' or an 'octave below'. Some candidates crossed out the first and changed it to the second and vice versa. The decision was made to accept both answers and many candidates gaining a mark here, with most being 'octave above'. There were however some candidates who opted for one of the other incorrect answers. The second instrument joined the melody and so must play the same notes which should have been a clue.

Question 7 (c)

(c) Name the percussion instrument that plays a single note at the start of bar 15.

..... [1]

Most candidates gained a mark here for the correct response of 'glockenspiel' or 'triangle'. Some wrote 'chimes or bells' which was not specific enough. There were those who wrote instruments that were not part of the percussion family. Candidates need to read and listen to the questions carefully to avoid making these mistakes.

Question 7 (d)

(d) Circle the bar where the double basses **enter** playing pizzicato for the first time.

[1]

Many candidates did not gain a mark here and very often it was because they made no response. They did not circle a bar and so could not be given any credit. It is vital that candidates attempt every question and with Question 7, where things are often required to be written on the score page, a double check should always be made to make sure that nothing is missed out.

Of those candidates who did respond, many circled the wrong bar. The double basses entered in 'bar 10' not 'bar 9' or '11', which were seen quite often, or any other bar.

Question 7 (e)

- (e) Give **four** features of the music that help to portray the romance between two characters. Do **not** repeat answers given above.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

[4]

Most candidates gained credit here. Many gained a mark for 'slow' because they had not written the correct tempo in Question 7 (a), conversely many candidates wrote 'slow' again and so were not able to gain credit because the question clearly stated that responses should not be repeated. Answers given most often were 'long notes', 'legato', 'minor', although there were many who wrote 'major', 'high', 'soft' and one of the instruments that were accepted i.e. 'strings, harp or piano'. More perceptive answers such as the 'flowing melody', the 'warm, expressive' nature of the music, and the 'leaps' of a '7th' were also seen.

Some candidates included lots of detail about the romance which was not necessary and took valuable time.

Question 8 (a)

- 8 This question is based on Area of Study 5 – Conventions of Pop.**

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

- (a) What is the style of this extract?

..... [1]

This appeared to be a popular choice of extract and some very good answers were seen to the whole of Question 8. However, there are only two genres of music on this specification that would fit with this style of music: the 'rock anthem', which it was and rock 'n' roll, which it was not. Many candidates opted wrongly for rock 'n' roll and others just wrote rock which was not specific enough. Candidates should be able to distinguish accurately between rock 'n' roll and its specific features and a 'rock anthem' and its specific features.

Question 8 (b)

(b) Give **two** features of the lead guitar in the introduction of this extract.

1

2

[2]

Many candidates gained at least 1 mark here and many gained the full 2 marks. 'Distortion', 'repeated phrase' or 'riff', 'loud', and 'picked' were among the most popular answers. 'Electric' was seen quite often but it was felt that a lead guitar could be nothing other than electric so this was not felt to be an acceptable answer. Other answers that were accepted but seen less frequently were 'reverb', 'swung' and 'vibrato'.

Question 8 (c)

(c) Give **three** features of the singing that you hear in this extract that are typical of the style.

1

2

3

[3]

Most of the candidates gained marks in this question and very many of those scored at least 2 marks. Some candidates wrote just three words such as 'loud', 'raspy' and 'high' and gained 3 marks.

'Melismatic' was a common incorrect answer, possibly being mistaken for the 'slides' at the end of the phrases. The vocalist was clearly singing 'syllabically'. Some also wrote 'falsetto' and while the singer had a 'high' voice, they did not use falsetto.

Question 8 (d)

(d) Give **four other** features that are typical of this style. You should refer to a variety of features in your answer but do **not** repeat answers given above.

1

2

3

4

[4]

While some very good responses were seen to this question, there were some candidates who wrote a great deal in Question 8 (b) and (c), more than was required, and so in their desire not to repeat answers from earlier, as instructed, they found themselves short of things to say here. When asked for a specific number of features it is best only to write that number, although candidates who write in sentences rather than single words are always likely to write a little more than necessary and they often get full credit before their answer is finished. The most common correct answer that candidates repeated was 'loud'. They had written this in either Question 8 (b) or (c) but wrote it again and could not gain credit. This was sometimes true of 'repeated phrases' or 'riff' that was given in Question 8 (b). Any reference to something repeated would not be given here if it had been given elsewhere except 'repeated rhythm' that was not accepted in Question 8 (b).

Credit was mostly given for '4/4', 'fast', 'backbeat', 'verse/chorus' structure, 'chords' and 'fills'. Some candidates wrote a list of instruments which will usually only be given 1 mark.

Supporting you

Teach Cambridge

Make sure you visit our secure website [Teach Cambridge](#) to find the full range of resources and support for the subjects you teach. This includes secure materials such as set assignments and exemplars, online and on-demand training.

Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can [forward them this link](#) to help get you started.

Reviews of marking

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

Access to Scripts

We've made it easier for Exams Officers to download copies of your candidates' completed papers or 'scripts'. Your centre can use these scripts to decide whether to request a review of marking and to support teaching and learning.

Our free, on-demand service, Access to Scripts is available via our single sign-on service, My Cambridge. Step-by-step instructions are on our [website](#).

Keep up-to-date

We send a monthly bulletin to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular professional development courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses for your subject on **Teach Cambridge**. You'll also find links to our online courses on NEA marking and support.

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

ExamBuilder is the exam paper builder platform for a range of our qualifications. [Find out more](#).

Free for all OCR centres with an Interchange account, it allows unlimited users per centre. We require an [Interchange](#) username to verify your centre's users for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account, please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username.

Once you have an Interchange username, use the form on [this page](#) to sign up for ExamBuilder, or ask an existing user at your centre to create an ExamBuilder account for you.

Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals (examined units only).

[Find out more](#).

Online courses

Enhance your skills and confidence in internal assessment

What are our online courses?

Our online courses are self-paced eLearning courses designed to help you deliver, mark and administer internal assessment for our qualifications. They are suitable for both new and experienced teachers who want to refresh their knowledge and practice.

Why should you use our online courses?

With these online courses you will:

- learn about the key principles and processes of internal assessment and standardisation
- gain a deeper understanding of the marking criteria and how to apply them consistently and accurately
- see examples of student work with commentary and feedback from OCR moderators
- have the opportunity to practise marking and compare your judgements with those of OCR moderators
- receive instant feedback and guidance on your marking and standardisation skills
- be able to track your progress and achievements through the courses.

How can you access our online courses?

Access courses from [Teach Cambridge](#). Teach Cambridge is our secure teacher website, where you'll find all teacher support for your subject.

If you already have a Teach Cambridge account, you'll find the link to the **Online courses** under the **Assessment** or **Training** tab – hover over **Assessment** or **Training** on the horizontal menu and select **Online courses** from the dropdown.

If you don't have a Teach Cambridge account yet, ask your exams officer to set you up – just send them this [link](#) and ask them to add you as a Teacher.

Access the courses **anytime, anywhere and at your own pace**. You can also revisit the courses as many times as you need.

Which courses are available?

We recommend all teachers complete the module on Online courses – NEA for their subject. These courses provide subject-specific information about course content; how to prepare for planning, marking and submitting; and support with understanding the marking criteria.

The subject-specific courses are tailored for each qualification that has non-exam assessment (NEA) units, except for AS Level and Entry Level. They cover the following topics:

- the structure and content of the NEA units
- the assessment objectives and marking criteria for the NEA units
- examples of student work with commentary and feedback for the NEA units
- interactive marking practice and feedback for the NEA units.

We are also developing courses for some of the examined units, which will be available soon.

How can you get support and feedback?

If you have any queries, please contact our Customer Support Centre on 01223 553998 or email support@ocr.org.uk.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how to improve the online courses and make them more useful and relevant for you. You can share your views by completing the evaluation form at the end of each course.

Tell us what you think

Your feedback plays an important role in how we develop, market, support and resource qualifications now and into the future. We want you and your students to enjoy and get the best out of our qualifications and resources, but to do that we need your honest opinions to tell us whether we're on the right track or not.

You can email your thoughts to resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk or visit our [feedback page](#) to learn more about how you can help us improve our resources.



Designing and testing in [collaboration with you](#) and your students



Helping young people develop an [ethical view of the world](#)



Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) are [part of everything we do](#)

Contact the team at:

☎ 01223 553998

🖥 ocr.org.uk

To stay up to date with all the relevant news about our qualifications, register for email updates at ocr.org.uk/updates

Visit our Online Support Centre at support.ocr.org.uk



OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

OCR is a Company Limited by Guarantee and an exempt charity. Registered in England. Registered office: The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA. Registered company number: 3484466.

We operate academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers.

We are committed to providing a fully accessible experience across all our products, platforms, and websites. Find out more about our [accessibility standards](#).

© OCR 2025. All rights reserved. We retain the copyright on all our publications. However, our registered centres are permitted to copy and distribute our material for their own internal use, in line with any specific restrictions detailed in the publication. Find out more about our [copyright policies](#).

We update our publications regularly so please check you have the most up-to-date version.

We cannot be held responsible for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and do not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

When we update our specifications, you'll see a new version number and a summary of the changes. While we do our best to reflect these changes in all associated resources on [Teach Cambridge](#), if you notice any discrepancies, please refer to the latest specification on our website and [let us know](#).

Our resources do not represent any teaching method we expect you to use. We cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in our resources.