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# **GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

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**GCE  
MUSIC  
AS/Advance**

**SUMMER 2023**

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:  
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

### **Online Results Analysis**

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

### **Annual Statistical Report**

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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**Music**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**Summer 2023**  
**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**  
**UNIT 1/4 – PERFORMANCE**

**General Comments**

A warm welcome was given to all examiners and the majority of candidates performed to their highest personal standards and seemed to enjoy the experience of performing live. There were, understandably, still some cases of nervousness and anxiety amongst candidates.

The return to the full requirements has been an issue for some centres. Perhaps I should begin with a reminder of these requirements:

- For WJEC AS Unit 1 and A level Unit 4 option B, candidates are required to perform **2 pieces for a minimum of 6 minutes and a maximum of 8 minutes.**
- For A level Unit 4 option A, candidates are required to perform **3 pieces, one of which must be a solo, for a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 12 minutes.**

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

There were some issues with candidates not performing for the minimum time this year. In an effort to clarify this for future examinations, the Board has decided that the visiting examiners will time **from the start of the candidate's first note to the end of the candidate's final note of each individual piece performed.** Rests, which are written into the work by the composer in order to give the performer a rest, will be included in the time. However, if there are long periods when the candidate is not performing (e.g.) a 2nd verse in a duet which is sung by another singer, or a 32 bar break for solo piano in a jazz piece, these will not be included in the time. Centres should carefully check the timings of each piece (allowing for a slightly quicker performance on the day due to nerves) but **should not enter these timings on the mark sheet.** The visiting examiner will be responsible for timing the individual pieces as they are performed, live.

In most cases, the administration and timetabling of the examinations was excellent with many centres providing running orders. In the case of longer sessions at colleges and where there are consortium arrangements between centres, please continue to build into your timetables comfort breaks for the examiners. Allowing 15 minutes for each candidate seems ideal in most cases. Please be aware of school bells and tannoy announcements which may impact on your candidate's performance. If at all possible, please timetable AS and A level examinations separately. Please note that examiners may arrive up to 30 minutes before the examinations are due to commence in order to set up and ensure a prompt start. Thank you for reserving a parking space for the visiting examiner, especially if you are aware that parking is an issue at your centre.

Most centres had downloaded the correct forms as required but, in some instances, these had been completed by the candidates themselves. Please double-check these for accuracy. Candidates' full names, rather than shortened forms or nicknames, should be entered on the forms. In addition, forms need to be completed neatly and legibly. In some instances, examination numbers were missing from the forms when they were given to examiners. Please include the names of composers, in addition to the titles of the pieces to be performed.

Please ensure that the link with an Area of Study has also been completed. At AS level the links are Western Classical Tradition, Baroque, Classical or Romantic Music, Rock and Pop, Musical Theatre and Jazz. At A level the links are as above with the addition of 20th and 21st Century Art Music. On occasions, the links made are rather tenuous.

Examination rooms were, on the whole, fit for purpose. Please ensure that the instruments used, particularly the pianos, are in good working order (including the pedals) and have been recently tuned. Some centres choose to use electronic keyboards.

In cases where the standard of the repertoire is known, it would be helpful if this information was given on the form.

Most candidates provided copies of their music for the examiners. Photocopies of the originals on A4 paper need to be made as the examiners will take these away at the end of the session. Please **ensure these are complete and in order and are correctly labelled with the candidate's name and number**. Please ensure that the music provided accurately reflects the performance being given, especially when downloading tab from the internet. In order to achieve the top marks for accuracy, singers must ensure that the vocal line has been added to lead sheets which also gives lyrics and chords. Please clearly mark any repeats, cuts or any other modifications on the copies. In addition, ensure that the edge of the music has not been cut off on the photocopy.

There were many excellent performers, but some candidates need to give more careful consideration to their choice of programme as some are over-ambitious. Conversely, the occasional candidate performed a lower standard piece (amongst more difficult repertoire) which resulted in a lower overall mark. When using a backing track, please ensure that the track is a true backing track, with the candidate's part omitted, not a complete recording which includes the part the candidate is performing. In some instances, extracts from works were performed. It should be noted that the playing of extracts will, in most cases, lead to a **lowering of the level of difficulty** for the work performed.

There is no requirement to perform an ensemble at AS or A level but some candidates choose to include an ensemble piece in their programmes. On occasions, more care is needed in choosing ensemble repertoire in order to ensure that the individual parts are significant and of the required standard. These parts must not be doubled by any other performer. Candidates also need to be aware of the technical challenge afforded by their own compositions. Teachers and candidates should familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria.

Standards of accompaniment were very good on the whole. Some centres now bring in professional accompanists.

Performers need to ensure that they pay attention to the performance directions on the music. Some drummers and guitarists are not aware of the need for contrast, especially of dynamics. **There should be no audible click tracks.** However, if a backing track is used by the candidate, through headphones, **it must also be audible to the examiner (without the click).** Some singers lack projection and communication due to over-reliance on their music. If the music or lyrics are needed, it would be preferable for them to be placed on a stand, slightly to the side of the performer. Best practice includes rehearsing the performances “in situ”, giving careful consideration to the position of the candidate in relation to the accompanist and the examiner; try to create the sense of occasion by involving other students and use this as an opportunity to check all the equipment which will be used. Give careful consideration to the position of an audience if present on the day, behind, and not encroaching on, the examiner, especially considering the recording equipment the examiner is using. As per examination guidelines, there should be no mobile phones present in the examination room (other than that being used by the examiner as a timer, which is preset to Airplane Mode.)

In most instances, electronic equipment had been set up and sound-checked in advance allowing the examination to proceed without hold-ups. Take care with the positioning of microphones and consider carefully whether microphones need to be used for an acoustic performance, especially in a small room or classroom.

### **Summary of key points**

On the whole, the feedback from the examining team was very positive and I am very grateful to all those involved, including the team based in the office in Cardiff.

**MUSIC**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**Summer 2023**  
**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**  
**UNIT 2 – COMPOSING**

**General Comments**

**Administration**

The administration was generally well executed this year.

**Uploading work/Labelling**

Most centres were well organised in their submissions and files were labelled correctly as according to WJEC guidelines. Some centres labelled the files with composition titles, as opposed to 'WCT' or 'Free' and this was a little more time-consuming to navigate.

**Candidate Logs**

Some candidate logs were excellent and full of informative detail; others were insufficiently detailed, rather unhelpful and seemed rushed. Almost all candidates and teachers provided the necessary authentication signatures. Some logs mentioned many influences on their work, while others gave almost a bar by bar analysis of the compositions – totally unnecessary when a score has been included. There were a few questionable comments (e.g., where the log stipulated Haydn, Mozart and Kermit the Frog's song from the Muppet movies as influences). There were far more examples this year of candidates not mentioning influences at all. Many candidates wrote informatively on the composition process, supporting the musical outcomes. Some of the spelling was below that expected at this level; examiners felt that a more careful checking process would have been beneficial in these instances.

Best practice was identified when candidates stated the suggested advice from teachers, and offered explanation as to how they developed and moved their composition forward, clearly stating where and when compositional features and devices were used. By justifying their musical choices and decisions, they displayed excellent musical understanding.

Overall, all candidate logs were typed and either submitted electronically or scanned to provide documents of good quality.

**Scores and Recordings**

Conventional scores were often detailed, including tempo markings, dynamics and articulation. In some cases, scores from programmes such as Sibelius, MuseScore and Flat.io were useful, though scores from Logic were less detailed, and at times a little confusing. There were some GarageBand screenshots (not as many as usual perhaps), but also many detailed lead sheets which offered much musical information and were much appreciated.

Sibelius, MuseScore, GarageBand and Logic Pro were all popular programmes this year, as well as others such as Flat, Capella, Noteflight, FL Studio, Cubase and Ableton. It was the first time Bandlab had been mentioned as a composing tool. Some candidates wrote copiously on the methods and techniques used, which was helpful to aid understanding of the composing process.

Candidates should always check to ensure that scores are totally accurate, as some scores had left multiple empty bars at the end of their finished piece, with what seemed to be 'rough ideas' randomly appearing at the very end. It was obvious that the composition had finished – however, to ensure that there is no confusion, 'rough' working or anything not expected to be assessed should be deleted.

Audio recordings were mainly computer generated, and it was also refreshing to hear a handful of live recordings including some by the BBC Chamber Orchestra. On the whole, recordings were of excellent quality, though some click tracks had been left on when exporting final audio tracks, which is obviously best avoided. Many candidates expressed that they exported their finished pieces and imported them into 'Note Performer'. The outcome gave extremely impressive instrumental sounds allowing for expression and articulation to be effectively communicated through the recordings. The level of detail on many pieces was very encouraging and, in most cases, displayed the high level of musical and digital understanding. It was most impressive to see that in some cases – even when sequencer style programmes had been used to produce the music – time and effort had been taken to produce a more traditional score providing all instrument parts, melody lines and lyrics. This was much appreciated.

Recordings were mostly well balanced. Digital technology is being utilised effectively across many centres, especially within the use of sequencing programmes and live audio tracks. It is encouraging to see that digital literacy is being well embedded into teaching and learning to develop skills and support the outcome of candidates' work.

## **Comments on individual sections**

### **The brief**

#### **Composition 1: WCT**

There were many excellent WCT influences mentioned this year, and this enabled candidates to acquire obvious stylistic understanding, with clear bass lines supporting suitable chord structures, fluent melodic shapes and thematic development, and textural variation. This reflects very well on the teaching. Shortcomings were often due to harmonic insecurities, lack of appropriate melody, phrase structures and direction, and insufficient development and textural exploration.

#### **1. Compose a nocturne for piano or small vocal ensemble, intended for performance in a chamber music concert at the local university.**

This option was extremely popular, and many of the compositions were interesting and effective. Most were composed for the piano, although there were some for small ensemble, or solo instrument and piano (such as oboe, horn, flute) which explored different instrumental timbres. Many cited Chopin and Field as their influences and wrote accordingly. The stronger candidates immediately captured the style, writing 'delicate' music with a strong, interesting sense of harmony, modulation, and good pianistic writing, achieving highly effective outcomes and displaying a clear understanding of the features appropriate to the style. Most candidates managed to capture the character of a nocturne, to varying degrees of success.

While top band content was enhanced by thoughtful use of dynamics and articulation, this was ignored by other candidates. Weaker pieces were unnecessarily ‘fussy’, with multiple slides, trills, glissando and the like, which lost their impact and structural focus after a while. Some compositions for piano were not pianistic and this cost marks.

## **2. Compose a piece for four performers which features modulation and imitation.**

This was also a popular choice. At the top end there were some impressive pieces, displaying fantastic interplay between parts (including some Classical inspired string quartets and Baroque-inspired polyphonic textures), including modulations which were successfully handled. It was felt that some candidates focussed on the requirement for four performers but were less concerned with the need to feature the harmonic device of modulation and the textural device of imitation.

**[A point of note here: if a brief requires the candidate to ‘feature’ a device in their work, it is expected that it is featured throughout the work and not presented just once in the composition.]**

The choices of instrumentation were varied and also included woodwind quartets, mixed small ensembles, and a composition for four harps (all playing one hand only). The results overall were mainly well structured, and most included attempt at modulation and imitation, with attention to the necessary stylistic traits of the WCT style. Examiners reported that it was ‘modulation’ that was less successfully presented generally and appeared to be the area in which candidates struggled most. In some of the more inconsistent examples, modulations were not handled carefully (e.g., there was no preparation, just a double bar line and a new key signature). Some of the less successful pieces were rather short and simplistic (barely meeting the minimum time, and in that short time, using repeated sections). Ternary form and rondo were commonly used, although there were some interesting examples using sonata form, which worked well in terms of fulfilling the ‘modulation’ part of the brief. Some candidates managed to fulfil one of the features (either imitation or modulation) but rather neglected the other.

## **3. Compose the opening of a piece of programme music which sets the scene for a stage production of ‘The Merthyr Riots’**

Another very popular choice for candidates, which elicited some extremely successful and interesting compositions. Instrumentation here was hugely varied, often chosen to suit the candidate’s particular interests and skills – a selection of pictorial and programmatic music was submitted which matched the marching and destruction, which seemed to be the two main themes. Some compositions were very imaginative and used a satisfactory manipulation of the original ideas. The programmatic nature of this brief also resulted in some very interesting and detailed composition logs, which of course supported the examining process.

Unfortunately, some candidates approached this like a piece of film music, resulting in pieces which were lacking a secure structure, or appropriate stylistic thematic and harmonic content. For example, one candidate included a drum kit (writing for ‘pit orchestra and drum kit’), which was not felt to be suitable. Non-adherence to the WCT requirements for the set brief pieces cost marks.

## **4. Compose the first two sections of a larger choral composition for SATB intended for performance in a choral concert to be held in an outdoor music festival in Singleton Park.**

There were very few examples of responses to this brief, none of which satisfied top band assessment criteria.

## Composition 2: Free

A range of styles and genres were submitted here, and the encouragement of candidates to embark on an individual composition rather than a whole class approach was evident in most centres. Candidates drew upon their musical strengths and many logs reflected the candidate's enjoyment in the composition process as it was something they were passionate about. It was encouraging to note candidates exploring their creativity a little more, with some imaginative writing noted.

The broad range of styles encountered here included:

- Jazz, Jazz/Rock fusion, Funk, Soul, Pop, Drum & Bass, Disco, Indie
- Musical Theatre
- Film music
- WCT compositions
- World music (including Spanish and Welsh influences)
- Rap music
- Romantic piano miniatures
- Impressionist pieces
- Video / gaming music.

Most of the candidates had included a suitable brief for the free composition. The most successful briefs were those where the aim of the composition and the style were outlined clearly, and details of the audience and musical style were also offered. These compositions were often the most coherent and conveyed that the finished composition was a successful product of clear and effective planning. Unfortunately, other candidates stated briefs that were particularly vague and lacked detail. (Some left the 'brief' blank but did explain their choice of brief in the 'main body' of the log).

Strong examples here played to candidates' strengths and showed instrumental variety, and development of interesting thematic and textural ideas along with fluent and substantial harmonic language. In these instances, examiners noted imaginative and creative composing, where much thought had gone into the methods to achieve a successful outcome.

Some pieces were overlong, and these lost focus and a sense of overall cohesion. This was common in film pieces, which often contained too many different sections or ideas, sometimes unrelated. (The WCT pieces were usually more focused). Many candidates used repeat marks, apparently to extend the material to fulfil time requirements, but avoiding the requirement to develop the material. For this reason, the use of repeat marks is not advised.

Weaker compositions in the 'free' category also lacked understanding of their chosen style, development of ideas and secure understanding in the technical control of the musical elements (as according to the style). For example, one candidate produced a free composition using mostly 4 chords – an 'instrumental indie song', which showed limited control of the musical elements and harmony. Pieces satisfying lower bands of the assessment criteria were overly simplistic and lacking rhythmic interest and variety. Other observations were as a lack of coherency among sections, limited harmonic content, use of existing 'loops' (for which the candidate does not gain credit), and unconvincing melodic and accompanying lines which were overly triadic/arpeggiated, then treated and developed in a rather muddled and inconsistent manner.

Centres are advised to be particularly vigilant on the incorporation of musical ideas that are not created by the candidate.

## **Content**

Overall, the standard was varied.

### **Creating musical ideas**

Most centres have clearly spent time with their candidates developing a good understanding of effective harmony, cadences, and technical control of the elements, including appropriate melodic lines – and this had a positive impact on candidates being able to access the higher bands. The best practice was excellent, showing effective structuring of initial ideas, balance and control – when careful consideration had been given to how to compose and present effective responses to the selected briefs.

Some portfolios demonstrated candidates struggling to compose at a higher level within the western classical tradition for AS Level, and there was an overreliance of repetition, layering techniques, and perhaps crucially, when harmony (and sometimes melody) was handled inappropriately. Some pieces, at the lower end, lacked any sort of melody line, and consisted mainly of chords.

### **Marks were lost when candidates did not demonstrate clear aspects of the WCT style in composition 1.**

Some centres evidently choose to do ‘whole class’ tasks for both the set brief and free. Although it is considered that this can suppress some candidates’ individual creativity, some centres managed this very successfully and encouraged individual responses which impressed.

### **Developing musical ideas**

Though there is not a discrete column for developing ideas in the WCT pieces at AS, some kind of manipulation of the initial material will certainly enrich the outcome; when the candidate successfully creates work which utilises typical features and devices of any selected style, the content will impress as they allow the content to grow and fulfil its potential. In the free composition, the second assessment column deals entirely with how the candidate has developed ideas. In the most impressive pieces, candidates used a ‘wide range’ of compositional techniques to ensure effective development in an organised and effective manner.

The weaker compositions were over-reliant on repetition. Some pieces used repeat marks to extend the piece, attempting to extend the simplest of ideas within the music. This offers nothing in the way of developing ideas further and are best avoided. At this level, examiners also reported of inappropriate musical ideas, and a lack of appropriate compositional devices (both melodic and harmonic) to develop the work.

### **Technical and Expressive Control of Musical Elements**

Effective and secure technical control of the musical elements, communicated effectively with expressive control is what is required here to score well in terms of the assessment. A lack of melodic character and conviction, and basic and often insecure harmonic understanding will lose marks. Once again, this year, some candidates tried to add complex rhythmic patterns, which tend to cloud the flow and form of the music – sometimes these were quite unmusical. Structurally, there was an element of unpredictability in many weaker compositions, where the music shot off in various directions, without reaching a sensible conclusion.

## Summary of key points

- Label all uploads according to WJEC guidelines and check all files before submission.
- Ensure that the brief for the free composition is clearly stated, as part of the assessment is directly related to 'the response to the chosen brief'.
- Avoid using repeat marks for the sole purpose of extending the work.
- Include notation or guide tracks when someone else other than the composer is involved in performing the pieces.
- Keep the requirements of the assessment criteria at the forefront of all thinking.

## **MUSIC**

### **General Certificate of Education**

**Summer 2023**

### **Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**

### **UNIT 3 – APPRAISING**

#### **General Comments**

AOS B, C & D were all well represented with musical theatre being the most popular of choices from centres. The range of dates from Cole Porter up to the present day musicals of Lloyd Webber are quite large and many candidates struggled this year to place the date of the extract/show. The most successfully answered area of study was Jazz, this is most likely due to the amount of common features contained in most pieces of jazz, candidates can learn many key words which can be relevant in most jazz pieces (syncopation, blue notes, walking bass etc). There are still many 'learned' essays from candidates which are not relevant to the questions asked and sometimes candidates unnecessarily go beyond the dates and composers listed within the specification. Some musical theatre essays give detailed accounts of the plot of musicals and this is irrelevant, similarly the citing of historic events within jazz and rock and pop is also not required.

The Western classical tradition essays are improving every year. Many candidates use the two-column format, and examiners were generally encouraged by the majority of responses. The advantage of writing in bullet points is clear on time management and clarity, the best answers also labelled their responses based upon the 'you may refer to' part of the question, this enabled some candidates to reach the higher bands. Whilst an element of 'learned essay response' can apply in candidate's answers, the best answer always focus upon the comparative detail that are contained within the two chosen extracts. Within the whole paper there is still a need for candidates to understand the correct meanings of key terminology. Two words that caused some confusion on set works this year were texture and structure.

#### **Comments on individual questions/sections**

#### **AREA OF STUDY B – ROCK AND POP 1965-1990**

#### **Question 1: We are the Champions – Queen**

- (a) Many candidates had the correct answer here. Credit was given for identifying the key with just 'F' although many candidates answered in full as F major.
- (b) Generally well attempted with many identifying it correctly as an imperfect cadence although every type of cadence was seen by examiners.
- (c) A variety of answers given here with only a few identifying the tonic minor.
- (d) The tick box question gave candidates an opportunity to select answers, but many failed to hear the changes in tonality accurately.

- (e) This was not well answered, suggesting that many candidates failed to understand the difference between simple and compound time.
- (f) This was generally well answered with many candidates identifying a sequence.
- (g) This was not well answered, despite the variance in shape of the melodies.
- (h) This was well answered, students and teachers are clearly familiar with this type of question.
- (i) There were some very interesting answers here, such as 8 quavers in a bar, 8 notes in every bar. Only the musical candidates knew the meaning.
- (j) Most candidates managed to gain a few marks here, with suitable descriptions of the instruments. The most popular answers were the piano chords, various use of drums and cymbals, and the guitar decorations. Many candidates wrote about the use of voices and vocals, which was not asked for. Some information was also given but lacked line or bar numbers and some candidates only listed instrument names without describing what they were doing.
- (k) Most candidates stated a relevant year for this extract.

### **Question 2: Performers on electric guitar**

There were some very good solid accounts here, perhaps reflecting their interests as pop/rock enthusiasts. However, there was much discussion of other instruments other than guitar, and many missed out on mentioning various styles within rock and pop. The examples given comprised a wide range, including The Beatles, Queen with Brian May, Jimi Hendrix, and also other interesting examples such as Slash, Joe Walsh, Jimmy Page, Mark Knopfler, and groups such as Pink Floyd and Deep Purple. The better candidates wrote maturely and efficiently with conviction, while at the other end of the spectrum, only some songs or performers were mentioned, missing out on answering the demands of the question. Sadly, there were some 'prepared' essays which had nothing at all to do with the topic.

## **AREA OF STUDY C – MUSICAL THEATRE**

### **Question 3: Anything but Lonely – Aspects of Love**

- (a) Many candidates had the correct answer here. Credit was given for identifying the key with just 'Bb' although many candidates answered in full as Bb major.
- (b) This was generally answered well, however it is worth noting that this is a two mark question and many candidates only answered one part.
- (c) This was answered well with many students getting this correct.
- (d) The better candidates did well here – naming a correct bar and the change in rhythm. Some only mentioned the bar number.
- (e) Generally well answered with many candidates recognising the shape of the melody from the choices given.

- (f) Most picked up at least one mark here for recognising tempo changes.
- (g) Not many recognised the chord accurately with many candidates hearing the Bb in the bass and suggesting the tonic rather than the first inversion of the relative minor.
- (h) This is a popular feature of many of Lloyd Webber's songs, but many candidates selected tone rather than semitone.
- (i) Most candidates managed to gain a few marks here, with suitable descriptions of the instruments. The most popular answers were the piano chords, various use of strings and brass. Many candidates wrote about the use of voice, which was not asked for. Some information was also given but lacked line or bar numbers and some candidates only listed instrument names without describing what they were doing.
- (j) A wide range of years were suggested for this ranging from the 1800s to 2020.

#### **Question 4: Styles of music**

There were quite a few prepared essays from candidates which sometimes worked well. Successful answers included the jazz style of Cole Porter moving on to the rock style of Andrew Lloyd Webber's Jesus Christ Superstar. A couple of centres had clearly covered Lloyd Webber's Joseph and his amazing technicolour dream coat which has a number of different styles within just one musical. On the other hand, there was a real mismatch of works and composers, as well as much later works included such as Hamilton and Wicked. Some candidates just wrote about plots of musicals without focusing on music in any detail which unfortunately is evident in this area of study every year.

#### **AREA OF STUDY D – JAZZ**

#### **Question 5 – Moanin' – Art Blakey.**

- (a) Many candidates had the correct answer here. Credit was given for identifying the key with just 'F' although many candidates answered in full as F major.
- (b) Nearly all candidates identified trumpet but failed to give the full name of tenor saxophone to achieve both available marks.
- (c) Most got this correct.
- (d) This was well answered as a recognisable structure.
- (e) Cadence was not always answered accurately with some noting perfect rather than plagal.
- (f) Some general stock answers for Jazz served the candidates well here.
- (g) This was generally answered well however it is worth noting that this is a two mark question and many candidates only answered one part.
- (h) Generally well answered with many candidates recognising the shape of the melody from the choices given.

- (i) A few good responses here, with some detail in the answers. The most popular answers were chromatic, repetition, blue notes, syncopation, as well as a few mentioning the bending or sliding.
- (j) Many candidates stated a relevant year for this extract.

### **Question 6 – Performers on trumpet/saxophone**

This was generally well answered with many candidates choosing Miles Davis and Charlie Parker as performers with relevant musical examples drawing from bigband/modal jazz and Bebop styles. There was an element of prepared essays here, but the more successful ones showed genuine research and an understanding of Jazz. Some candidates who did poorly spoke about Dave Brubeck's Time Out album or Glenn Miller's in the mood without addressing the focus of the question.

## **AREA OF STUDY A – WESTERN CLASSICAL TRADITION**

### **Question 7 – Divertimento**

- (a) For the identification of a sequence candidates need to show a whole sequence, not just the one phrase alone. A mixture of responses here and inexplicably some candidates not even attempting to select a bar between 1 and 8 and leaving it blank.
- (b) Mixed response here. The rhythm was correct by many candidates, but the pitch was very poor; only a very few candidates managed the chromatic line. Again, there were blanks here; it's as if some candidates give up before starting.
- (c) This was poorly answered on the whole, with many giving the correct bar number but not the correct beat number.
- (d) Many candidates got this wrong suggesting that many still struggle with the correct words to describe texture.
- (e) The key and cadence was answered better with many candidates achieving marks.

## **THE SYMPHONY**

### **Question 8 – Comparison**

This was generally well answered by many candidates. The most successful answers were usually the ones that had separated the answer into two columns. Some candidates had clearly read the question well and labelled their answers with 'orchestration/use of instruments', 'Harmony and tonality', 'Texture', 'Any other features' as such they were able to achieve the higher band marks with some of their responses. As stated in previous reports the use of columns and bullet points enables candidates to maximise their time and be clear with their answers.

As expected, there were some 'learned' answers which although were relevant for many of the observations of the individual extracts by period, the overall answers lacked the comparative detail between the two pieces.

### **Question 9 – Haydn Symphony No. 103 in Eflat – ‘Drum Roll’**

- (a) Many candidates knew the year, although there were some rogue answers such as 1605, 1897 and even 1975.
- (b) I was pleasantly surprised by the number of candidates that knew these Italian terms; mostly well answered here.
- (c) The anacrusis and unison were well answered, but melodic augmented second left much to be desired. Only the better candidates knew this, and many missed naming the instruments.
- (d) This was very poorly answered on the whole, apart from by a few candidates.
- (e) Candidates seem to like questions on similarities and differences, and usually perform well; this year was the same. The most popular answers were the same key, same material, sustained notes in the similarities, and the solo violin sextuplets, use of oboe/bassoon and the use of dynamics.
- (f) The key and cadence were well answered on the whole candidates do have the scores in front of them to aid with this.
- (g) The term structure eluded some candidates, and there were quite a few who wrote on anything but structure. Those who performed well here wrote clearly on the various sections, easily gaining the four marks.
- (h) As there were so many options on the mark scheme, many candidates scored well here, noting the cello part, the imitation, the tonic pedal, the semiquaver figures and the monophonic violin at the end of the extract. Some candidates however wrote on anything but texture and therefore missed out on marks.

### **RELIGIOUS CHORAL MUSIC**

#### **Question 10 – Comparison**

As with the similar question on ‘The symphony’, this was generally well answered by many candidates. The most successful answers were usually the ones that had separated the answer into two columns. Some candidates had clearly read the question well and labelled their answers with ‘orchestration/use of instruments and voices’, ‘Harmony and tonality’, ‘Texture’, ‘Any other features’ as such they were able to achieve the higher band marks with some of their responses. As stated in previous reports the use of columns and bullet points enables candidates to maximise their time and be clear with their answers.

As expected, there were some ‘learned’ answers which although were relevant for many of the observations of the individual extracts by period, the overall answers lacked the comparative detail between the two pieces.

#### **Question 11 – Mozart Requiem**

- (a) This was not very successfully answered with the most common answer being 1791 (Mozart’s death).
- (b) Nearly all candidates knew Adagio; Tasto solo was more of a challenge – some blanks here.

- (c) This was very well answered with candidates clearly identifying ways Mozart created the appropriate mood. The most common answers here were: Minor, slow tempo, piano dynamics.
- (d) This was not answered very well with the exception of the syncopation question which many got correctly. Some candidates chose to leave blanks rather than selecting a bar number between 8 and 15.
- (e) Many candidates were familiar with the diminished 7<sup>th</sup>, but the D minor second inversion was only correctly answered by a few.
- (f) Candidates liked this question with many writings copiously on the textures involved, along with the solo soprano line.
- (g) Most candidates identified sections well. Some candidates wrote about other details including harmony and tonality which were not relevant.
- (h) Most candidates picked up something here, but only a few answered both the key and cadence correctly.

## **MUSIC**

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**Summer 2023**

### **Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**

## **UNIT 5 – COMPOSING**

### **General Comments**

Mostly, procedures were correctly adhered to, though there were some issues when incorrect scores, audios or logs were uploaded, or some content was missing.

It is important that the teacher and candidate confirm that the work is solely that of the candidate. Any material not created by the candidate must be acknowledged in the appropriate space in the log. Those opting for the extended option in Composing must remember that the second composition must be linked to one of the Areas of Study as found in the specification.

### **Uploading work/Labelling**

Some examiners reported that all uploads were labelled clearly and correctly, according to WJEC guidelines with both compositions, and with the audios being easily identifiable; others felt the labelling of files in some centres lacked clarity and consistency. It was also recommended that centres to check the correct files have been attached, and that they open and work.

### **Candidate Logs**

Some centres used the incorrect forms for logs – it is important to select appropriately according to the standard (i.e., AS, A Level Option A or B). Composition 1 should be from the selected briefs and in a Western Classical style, composition 2 is the free composition. The best candidate logs were useful and informative, offering lots of detail about the composition process; however, many were minimal with sparse and insufficient explanation.

Although it is not marked, examiners find the candidate log invaluable as it highlights important details about the pieces and allows the candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the requirements. Most of the 'free briefs' were sufficiently detailed, but some were a little unclear and vague. Some information in the logs contradict the content of the pieces (for example, one candidate stated they were 'grade 8 piano' and understood how to write for piano but proceeded to write something totally unplayable). While some candidates included information regarding the computer software they had used, many omitted this. Influences noted in logs included Vivaldi, Pachelbel, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Schubert and Chopin.

Best practice was noted when the information provided supported the musical outcome heard; many candidates successfully displayed their understanding of the composing process through the information they provided on initial intentions, influences, musical reasoning and any advice received from their teachers.

Please advise future candidates to check for spelling and grammatical errors. This does not detract from the marking process, but it is still good practice to check (and double check) documents before the final submission.

## **Scores and Recordings**

Presentation was generally very good with effective use of ICT to create excellent scores which included performance directions, bow markings, dynamics, phrase marks and the like. A screenshot was provided as a score in many cases – and when this is the case, a detailed written description of the composition accompanied by an outline of the melody and chords is required. Some lead sheets were thought to be lacking in sufficient detail, while some screenshots were presented without any annotation at all; these are of very little use. Several scores had endless empty bars at the end of compositions; this could be addressed to make the final outcome more professional.

Many audio files were computer generated and very worked well, and examiners generally felt that the quality of recordings was better than in previous years, with most being relatively well balanced with all parts audible. This is an important consideration. There were fewer live realisations of compositions and when this is the case, it is important to note that the composition is marked not the performance, especially if there are inconsequential slips in pitch, rhythm or timing.

Note: audio files should be uploaded separately i.e., not two compositions on the one track. Furthermore, there is no requirement to announce the candidate or the works.

## **Comments on individual questions/sections**

### **The brief**

In some centres, all candidates chose the same brief, and this led to similar outcomes. Please give candidates the choice, with guidance, as they will generally succeed more in something that is of interest to them. In fewer cases, this happened for the free compositions too, where all candidates from the centre created a similar piece in a specific style.

There were some excellent examples of the WCT style, where the work showed textural variety and control, and a solid understanding of structure and balance, focussed melodic direction, harmonic interest and security and an interesting and substantial presentation of ideas. As with Unit 2, there were many excellent WCT influences mentioned and only a handful that didn't mention any.

### **Composition 1: WCT**

Worryingly, there were compositions completed by candidates with little or no attempt to compose in a Western Classical style. This severely affected marks. The more successful Western Classical Style compositions were instrumental as insufficient musical substance and control of the elements was lacking in some of the vocal/choral pieces.

Overall, there was a fairly wide spread of marks. At the top end, examiners reported impressive work, where the harmony was substantial, interesting and well controlled, thematic ideas were stylistic and textural presentation was creative and thoughtful. Some candidates did not manage to create a convincingly WCT style, with frequent changes of time signature, (not particularly in keeping with WCT), and not always convincingly in terms of the structure. The least successful pieces displayed a limited understanding and control of musical elements and were often harmonically unstable. Some work included had unresolved dissonances, some used only the primary chords in root position, while other compositions had melody lines totally at odds with the chosen chords and accompaniment.

Careful attention still needs to be given to vocal writing if this is a chosen option, and strengthening candidates' awareness and understanding of appropriate vocal ranges and effective word setting to improve vocal writing further is advised.

## **Brief Compositions**

### **1. Compose a piece for small ensemble in ritornello form intended for performance in a chamber concert to be held in the Pavilion Mid Wales**

The form was well executed in many efforts, with most candidates understanding what had to be done within this clear WCT structure. The stronger candidates wrote creatively in repeats of the A sections, by manipulating and varying the first section; indeed, there were some fantastic examples here. Often, a Baroque style was adopted, and devices such as sequence and imitation worked particularly well in this context. There were also Classical and Romantic inspired pieces. In the more 'limited' and 'inconsistent' compositions the thematic material tended to be very short, and not particularly well-shaped, and episodes/contrasting sections were often so contrasting in style and character (even in key and time signature) that they affected the overall coherence and cohesion of the piece. The chosen instrumentation was usually suitable, and the best examples displayed idiomatic writing. There was some particularly good string and woodwind writing, although writing for brass was not always as secure.

### **2. Compose a vocal duet with accompaniment. The two characters must be portrayed in a scene taken from Mozart's 'Don Giovanni'. You may write your own words.**

Only a handful chose this option, writing for two voices and piano or orchestra. Some candidates created antiphonal compositions, with two voices that never sang together, or only joined together toward the end of the composition. There was obvious research into the possible storylines and chosen characters (though some lyrics chosen didn't seem to fit into context). The music was mostly Classical in nature, with suitable accompaniment also. Unfortunately, the general standard of these pieces lay below Band 4 in terms of assessment. Sufficient thought had not been given to vocal range, word setting and successful writing for voices, and at times the style tended to lapse slightly into more pop/musical theatre in terms of the accompaniment.

### **3. Compose the opening of a piece of music commissioned to portray the majestic ruin of Tintern Abbey. You may choose to write for voice, or instruments, or a combination of both.**

This was one of the most popular options, and the programmatic and atmospheric slant obviously suited the candidates. Many compositions portrayed the monks, the emptiness, the sunlight, and the evocative nature of the ruins. There was some very interesting harmonic and melodic content, as well as fascinating instrumentation from brass groups and small ensembles to full orchestra, and woodwind, drums and voices, piano solos, solos with piano accompaniment and even songs. It certainly captured the musical imagination of many candidates. A fair proportion of the pieces were Romantic era inspired; however, while many compositions captured the intended ambience and atmosphere as intended, they lost sight at times of the necessary technical, structural and stylistic features of the WCT.

#### **4. Compose the first two sections of an instrumental trio, with or without accompaniment.**

This was also a popular choice amongst A level candidates. The form was well utilised, with the most convincing efforts realising that there had to be two contrasting sections. There were several Baroque influenced pieces here, some candidates were influenced by the Classical era in terms of style, while a few were a mix of Classical and Baroque. Some candidates wrote the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Subject of a sonata form piece, others wrote a theme and a variation, and there were also those who composed the A and B sections of a hypothetical rondo. While the more successful candidates composed two sections that were contrasting, but also related in some way to each other in terms of style, the less successful responses often had two very different sections that bore little relation to each other, thus affecting the overall coherence. There was a long pause between sections in one piece, which felt like two totally different compositions.

Most candidates wrote for three instruments, with some writing for three instruments plus piano/harpsichord (these tended to be more successful in terms of harmony than the purely three-part pieces). Examiners reported of some very good part writing and it seemed that pieces which used three different instruments tended to be more successful than examples where three instruments the same were used (e.g., three flutes). There were occasions where the piano was chosen as one of the three instruments, rather than as an accompaniment to the trio – and on occasion the piano was not treated as an ‘equal’ instrument, so rather than a trio, the piece was more like a duet with accompaniment.

The higher scoring pieces used and controlled the elements effectively, e.g., displaying rhythmic and textural variety. Works by the weaker candidates lacked fluency and depth, and there often appeared to be an outpouring of all kinds of busy (and seemingly unconnected) rhythms, constant and sometimes misplaced embellishment, and much meandering.

#### **Composition 2: Free**

The free option, as expected, covered a multitude of styles, according to the candidates’ personal skills, preferences and musical abilities. Many of the observations made at AS level also apply here.

The list of briefs included the following:

- Jazz, rock, pop, funk
- Film and incidental music
- Musical Theatre
- Harp variations
- Percussion ensemble
- Nocturnes
- Impressionism.
- WCT style
- Neo-Classical

A few points to note: film music should have a clear storyline or be put into context; lyrics should be included in a song; whatever the selected style, candidates must develop the initial ideas, otherwise no credit can be given in the second column of the assessment criteria.

It is not sufficient to state 'free' as the intended brief. Though intentions may be clarified in the candidate log, the brief must be inserted as per guidelines in the allocated place in the log. The musical response is assessed directly in response to the brief (column 1 of the assessment criteria). Failure to do so can cost marks.

Examiners reported that the overall standard of compositions was very pleasing, feeling it was clear that many candidates had strengthened their composing skills throughout the course to create more clearly structured and balanced pieces, and displaying a more in-depth understanding of compositional devices and harmonic progressions. The highest scoring candidates included sufficient development to satisfy the mark scheme, utilising a wide range of compositional devices and techniques in a sophisticated manner.

At this level, there was a real understanding for the chosen instruments and genre, fluency and direction in the melodies and effective, sophisticated development of thematic, harmonic and textural ideas. The least successful pieces (those limited to band 2) were too simplistic and at times lacking melodically, therefore difficult for candidates to score highly for development as the treatment of the initial melodic material was considered weak and inconsistent.

Please remind future candidates that the use of offending language in lyrics is inappropriate and unacceptable for examination purposes.

## **Content**

As already mentioned, compositions inspired by candidates' strengths, interests and focused research tend to be the most successful – some centres where all candidates had chosen the same brief led to similar responses and on occasion, felt rather mathematical. Future candidates should always consider how compositions could be improved and varied throughout the composing process, referring to melody, structure, harmony, texture, and rhythm. Examiners reported of some truly impressive creativity and musical understanding at the highest level.

There were some rather uneven folios, where one piece was stronger than the other; some candidates seemed to have spent longer on their WCT piece, even though the free one was worth more marks. In other cases, the free pieces were rather unsubstantial, including some very short piano miniatures which lacked development. Some candidates missed the opportunity to use dynamics and articulation, which may have enhanced their work; this was particularly true of the 'tech' based pieces.

## **Creating musical ideas**

The candidates who reached the upper band of marks created logical and sophisticated pieces, with musical ideas that were well structured. A number of candidates needed to focus on establishing their own melodic ideas, rather than closely imitating others. The creation of melodic ideas was more successful when writing the free composition, and the creation of musical ideas in a Western Classical proved problematic for some. A melody needs direction and flow; unfortunately, a minority of melodies were overly disjunct and unmusical. Initial ideas must be prepared, refined, appropriate and consistent in the intended style of choice.

## **Developing Musical ideas**

To access the top bands a wide range of compositional techniques would be expected including use of recognised development devices. This needs more focus for pedagogy by teachers as mentioned in previous reports.

As indicated already in this report, some work lacked sufficient – and certainly sophisticated – musical development. Many candidates chose to compose in a repetitive style, and in some cases with theme and variation, modern club dance pieces, minimalism and to some extent pop songs, they were simply not varied enough. It is important to think about contrast which will enhance marks in the development of ideas and control of musical elements criteria. For example, contrasting sections, interesting use of layers, varying timbres, additional textural features such as countermelodies, subtle development and extensions of melody, widening the harmonic palette, expanding the rhythmic shapes and patterns (but ensuring manageability).

### **Technical and Expressive Control of Musical Elements**

Lower band works lacked clear organisation and fluency. Some of these were very predictable in their outcomes and were only partially coherent. The control of the elements of music needed more focus especially with harmonic progress. Candidates need to use a variety of chords, thoughtful chord progressions, use of inversions and sensible cadential points particularly in the WCT pieces. Texture needed to be controlled and expanded more effectively especially in vocal pieces (some compositions were hymns in a homophonic style). There are opportunities to exhibit textural variety and control in all composition genres. Several compositions lacked articulation, dynamics and performing techniques and these would have communicated expressive control and musical understanding. In terms of structure, many compositions started very positively but lost focus and direction, which affected marks. Quite a few compositions finished unexpectedly, and without a firm conclusion.

Candidates need to research instrumentation and techniques used by a range of different composers to ensure understanding. These musical elements and techniques can then be employed in their own work.

### **Summary of key points**

- Label all required uploads according to WJEC guidelines. Check all files before submission, including the audio files for clarity and balance.
- Ensure that the chosen brief for a free composition piece is achievable and clearly stated in the log, remembering that part of the assessment is directly related to ‘the response to the chosen brief’.
- Be reminded that no marks are awarded for existing musical ideas or an interpretation of an idea by a performer that is not the candidate’s own. Guide tracks must be included when there is no score for performers other than the composer. Credit can only be given for ideas (including expression and interpretation) that is the work of the candidate.
- Refine the initial musical content to ensure musicality, conviction, general theoretical/stylistic understanding, and coherence. Keep the requirements of the assessment criteria at the forefront of all thinking, planning an effective presentation of ideas and subsequent development of the material.
- Avoid using repeat marks for the sole purpose of extending ideas.

**MUSIC**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**Summer 2023**  
**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**  
**UNIT 6 – APPRASING**

**General Comments**

The most common areas of study this year were Impressionism, Musical Theatre and the Symphony. Generally, there is some impressive work being done by centres as is evident in the candidates' knowledge in set works and within their chosen categories ranging from the musicals of Stephen Sondheim, the 1960s recordings of Miles Davis and the works of Kizzy Crawford. There is a vast amount of knowledge required for the Western Classical tradition areas of Religious choral music and the symphony and it is refreshing to read the varied examples within the essay questions.

There remains some lack of knowledge from some candidates in harmony and tonality questions, common across AOS E and AOS F with answers sometimes mixing the two up or referring to melody and texture instead, also noted this year a number of questions here were not attempted by candidates at all.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**AREA OF STUDY F**

**STRAND 1 - IMPRESSIONISM**

**Question 1: Debussy – Reflets Dans L'eau**

- (a) Many candidates were unable to understand precisely what was meant by one feature of the harmony and one feature of the melody of Debussy *Reflets dans l'eau*. Harmony – some noted the pedal A flat bass and some gave the whole tone flavour. Melody – Very few noted the La Mer motif; some noted the dotted rhythms, and a few mentioned the whole tone content. Some candidates mentioned motif B but did not describe any feature of the motif.
- (b) This was a mixed bag of answers, with some mentioning the triplets, motif z2, the augmentation and the parallel motion.
- (c) The most popular words here were arpeggios and triplets.
- (d) Most candidates got this right.
- (e) Most candidates got the two possible marks here, naming the sections and the rondo form.

- (f) The better candidates wrote well, with an honest effort to compare both pieces, as well as concentrating on use of melody. A few musically mature candidates wrote copiously, even adding to another answer booklet. There were of course some ramblings and concentrating more on one piece than the other. The weaker efforts showed limited knowledge, writing on anything rather than melody within the two pieces, sometimes concentrating on the chords used, the texture and the harmony. One or two candidates omitted the question completely.

## **STRAND 2 – CHAMBER MUSIC IN WALES**

### **Question 2: Plowman – Night Dance No. 1**

- (a) Harmony – very poorly answered; there are still candidates out there that don't know the meaning of harmony. Melody – this was better, with some gaining a mark for their efforts.
- (b) The favoured phrases here the cluster chords and ostinato, as well as one or two mentioning other composers' influences.
- (c) Potluck here again – not many got this correct.
- (d) This section was not a bad attempt – most got the Dance 1B but missed the Dance 1C.
- (e) This was not very well answered, although some picked up on the use of serial techniques.
- (f) The same difficulties arose here as in the Impressionism ten marks question – lack of knowledge on both pieces, a big effort on the Plowman and less on the Wilson-Dixon, or vice versa. The better candidates offered full accounts of the use of melody and kept to the point, but many lacked comparative detail.

## **STRAND 3 – POPULAR MUSIC IN WALES**

### **Question 3: If We Were Words – Gruff Rhys**

- (a) This was well answered, with many noting the conjunct, the limited range or the repeated notes.
- (b) I think it was only one candidate who got the chords correct; there were many blanks and many wrong answers.
- (c) This section was far better; most candidates got the full two marks here.
- (d) This was well answered, apart from the term Middle 8 – many put in the Chorus section here.
- (e) This was also well answered, with the majority gaining a mark.
- (f) This question on instruments suited many candidates and the majority managed to note enough features to gain the full two marks.

#### **Question 4: Golden Brown – Kizzy Crawford**

There were some very credible answers here, and it was obvious that many candidates knew other Kizzy Crawford songs very well, the most popular choices being *Caer o Feddyliau* and *Pili Pala*. The better answers included a logical account of this particular song, naming the structural sections, and mentioning a similar musical style in other songs. One or two candidates wrote maturely, gaining marks in the 'accurate and convincing' band.

#### **STRAND 4 – AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE**

#### **Question 5: As Long as You're Mine – Wicked**

- (a) Only a few candidates were successful here with many including the whole Ab chord in addition to extra notes of Bb and occasionally D.
- (b) This was well answered, the most common mistake was candidates substituting the final C section with an A to get an AABA structure.
- (c) This was fairly well answered, with many getting the change from major to minor on 'fast', but not so good in the suspension. Candidates lost marks by only putting in the line number rather than the word or leaving the whole question blank.
- (d) Rhythm was good, with the majority mentioning the syncopation or the triplet, but the melody section was not so well answered. The stronger candidates noted the octave leap.
- (e) Many candidates answered well in this question.
- (f) Candidates fared well here, with the majority being able to recognise the features of the instruments for a full two marks.

#### **Question 6: The Right Girl – Follies**

This was well answered on the whole. Obviously, some centres had researched Stephen Sondheim really well, and the other songs mentioned were from a wide range of musicals, such as *Sweeney Todd*, *Into the Woods*, *Company* and *Sunday in the Park with George*. The descriptions of the musical style were well answered, and there were some genuine insights into the musical features, written in a logical and clear manner, as well as realistic comparisons with other Sondheim songs.

#### **STRAND 5 – JAZZ LEGENDS**

#### **Question 7: Isfahan – Duke Ellington**

- (a) Many candidates correctly identified Alto Saxophone.
- (b) This was also well done, with many gaining the full mark.
- (c) Even though the question mentioned 'other than the drum kit and double bass', these instruments still appeared in some answers. This question was not particularly well answered.
- (d) This was far better, with many noting the vibrato, the bends or scoops, the glissandi and the wide dynamic range.

- (e) This was poorly answered – many blanks, and most candidates were way off with the bar numbers.
- (f) Candidates seemed to like this question, with the majority going for the ABAC form, and numbering the bars.

### **Question 8: Eighty-One – Miles Davis**

There were some good answers here, which were obviously well researched as regards Miles Davis generally. A few candidates reached the top band of marks, and some were in Band 2. The majority knew about Miles Davis' style amid much contextual knowledge. Relevant Davis works were mentioned by many, with convincing description in the better efforts.

## **AREA OF STUDY E: THE WESTERN CLASSICAL TRADITION**

### **Question 9: String Quintet by Schubert**

- (a) The two errors were only marked correct in very few scripts, although the second error (rhythm) was the better answered, perhaps because it appears another two times within the extract. Some circled the correct location but failed to follow through. Not many full marks were awarded here. Maybe the problem was that candidates assumed it was a melody in the treble clef, and in the first pitch error, wrote G as the new note instead of B (in the bass clef).
- (b) This was very poorly done; only very few got it correct.
- (c) The missing pitch and rhythm started well, with most gaining a mark for the first note but then degenerated into either complete omission, or writing the correct rhythm mainly, but foregoing the pitch. Many candidates only concentrated on the rhythm only. The stronger candidates included the tie and the C#. Maybe leger lines confused a few here too.

## **THE SYMPHONY**

### **Question 10 – Symphony No 1 Brahms – Movt 4**

- (a) There were some very thorough and logically written answers here with many mentioning far more than five statements to gain the full marks. Very impressive answers from many candidates showing good score analysis skills.
- (b) This question was answered poorly by many. Candidates were confused by 'harmony and tonality' again; many wrote on textures, instrumentation, structure, – anything but harmony and tonality. Only the stronger candidates wrote on the keys used and the modulations.
- (c) This was well answered in the main.
- (d) Comparison questions suit most candidates, and usually there is enough detail relating to valid marks here. This was no exception this year.
- (e) Not many candidates gained a mark here – imperfect seemed to be the most popular answer.

### **Question 11 – use of melodic material and thematic development 1830-1910**

Some centres have obviously studied a set number of composers and their symphonies which was clear when marking similar answers from centres, many of these were learned essays which didn't always fit the question and the balance between biographical detail and genuine analysis was not always attained.

The better candidates wrote clearly and logically, working through various works and composers, and always referring back to the question. Apart from the usual composers and works that we would expect in such an answer, there were some refreshing examples mentioned, such as Ives, Franck and Borodin. Unfortunately, there were some off-track answers and mixed-up facts, many candidates also decided to spend some time discussing Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert despite the clear 1830 start to the area of study. There were one or two outstanding essays this year – a pleasure and joy to read such mature and musical efforts.

### **RELIGIOUS CHORAL MUSIC**

#### **Question 12 – Verdi Requiem – Liber Scriptus**

- (a) This was not always answered correctly with candidates opting generally for either the first or second options.
- (b) Generally, very good responses here, with most candidates able to mention at least five observations to gain good marks. It was very easy here to gain the maximum marks.
- (c) This was also well answered, with the majority gaining full marks. Some candidates wrote copiously and mentioned up to ten points. There were some really good descriptions regarding the tension and drama in the music.
- (d) This question was well answered by the more musical candidates, noting the bar numbers and valid features of harmony and tonality. The not so good candidates struggled with naming keys and use of tonality. Once again, harmony and tonality was ignored by many, and therefore no marks were awarded.

#### **Question 13 – changes in the nature and role of religious choral music.**

Only a few were able to grasp the contextual knowledge and examples needed to fully answer the question. Many mentioned the usual relevant composers, with others mentioning Cherubini, Stainer, Tomasek and Elgar. One candidate stuck religiously to Bach Mozart and Beethoven, without venturing further across the timeline. There were some essays which concentrated on historical detail and quirky facts about the chosen composer or work. On the other hand, the better efforts were excellent, with much relevant detail within musically mature essays. These were perceptive and thorough, with convincing detail, and obviously displaying full knowledge of oratorios and religious choral music.



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