

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/01 Unprepared Listening</p>

General comments

There was a wide range of achievement in this paper, with some candidates gaining very high marks, and others answering very few questions correctly. As in previous years, there continues to be a problem for some candidates in understanding what is meant by musical texture. There are also difficulties for many candidates in identifying periods in music history – mistaking a piece by Benjamin Britten for voice, clarinet and flute as coming from the Baroque period was the most surprising example of this. Candidates must also focus on the evidence in the recorded extracts when answering questions about style and period. Many candidates answered the question about which features of extract A2 were typical of the Classical style by talking about the size of the orchestra – yet this was a piano solo.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION A

Music A1

- 1 Flute. Well answered.
- 2 Tenor. Well answered.
- 3 Starts with an ascending interval, and moves in leaps. Reasonably well answered.
- 4 Clarinet. Well answered.
- 5 Portamento / glissando / slide / pitch-bending. Reasonably well answered.
- 6 There were a variety of ways to gain credit here (see below), and many candidates did very well.

[Initially they accompany a line each / play in alternation; after long notes in octaves they then imitate each other before playing together / playing octave jumps in contrary motion / inversion (or ascending and descending scales).]

- 7 (a) Twentieth Century / Modern. A large number of candidates stated Baroque.
(b) A variety of answers, often incorrect. Examiners were looking for one of the following points: chromaticism; angular melody; advanced instrumental techniques (e.g. flutter-tonguing); irregular phrase lengths; free rhythmic structure.

Music A2

- 8 Allegretto / Allegro / Andante / Andantino. Reasonably well answered.
- 9 (a) Turn. Very few candidates chose this option.
(b) Most candidates commented that the music was louder but very few noticed the Alberti Bass.
- 10 The pitch is the same but the rhythm has changed / there are more notes / there is syncopation / there are four quavers instead of two crotchets (repeated notes were accepted). The left hand is the same. Reasonably well answered.

- 11 Ternary. Theme and variations was the most common incorrect response.
- 12 There were a large number of points (see below) that could be made here; most candidates gained some credit, but very few made three accurate points.

[Regular phrase lengths; antecedent and consequent phrases; alberti bass; simple, mainly diatonic harmony; use of scalar passages; modulation to the dominant in a bridge passage; limited range of piano; homophonic texture / dominant right hand melody.]

SECTION B

Music B1

- 13 Sarangi. (bowed string instrument or the name of a bowed string instrument was accepted). A wide variety of responses, including plucked string instruments and even wind instruments.
- 14 Some candidates gained both marks, but there were some very vague answers. Examiners accepted phrases such as the following: it is fast, improvisatory and virtuosic; the melody has a wide range and is arpeggiatic; it frequently returns to the same low note, which is heavily accented; there is a drone in the background; it is repetitive.
- 15 Tabla / Indian drums. Surprisingly few candidates identified the tabla.
- 16 Few candidates made two accurate points. Points accepted were as follows: the rhythm becomes steadier / slower; the sarangi plays at a lower pitch / over a smaller range of notes / is less complex / virtuosic.
- 17 India. A variety of responses.

Music B2

- 18 E minor. G major was the most common incorrect response.
- 19 Guitars / charangos. Well answered.
- 20 Pan pipes (blown wooden pipes was accepted). Reasonably well answered.
- 21 There were a large number of ways to gain credit here (see below), but many candidates seemed to know nothing at all about musical texture and wrote about dynamics instead.

[During the introduction the melody is in the bass with higher chords. There is then a pan pipe melody accompanied by chords, a bass line which sometimes doubles the melody and a rhythm on a low drum. A second set of pan pipes joins in and the melody is doubled in thirds.]

- 22 Latin America / South America / Peru. Well answered.

Music B3

- 23 Many candidates answered this question very well eg the solo voice is answered by the full choir and repeated; there is a duet which is answered by the full choir and repeated; a short duet is answered by the full choir and repeated; the first choir phrase is heard six times; call and response.
- 24 Many candidates gained one mark for singing chords/homophonically, but few noticed the parallel motion ((the same melody at different pitches was accepted).
- 25 Africa. Well answered.

SECTION C

Music C1

- 26** F major. Reasonably well answered.
- 27** Acciaccatura. A variety of responses.
- 28** Staccato. A variety of responses.
- 29** Descending sequence. A variety of answers.
- 30** C major, Perfect. A variety of answers.
- 31** A rising scale in thirds. A variety of responses.
- 32** Major sixth. Reasonably well answered.
- 33** A – B flat – C – G – A – B flat – C. A wide variety of answers ranging from completely correct to no attempt to answer. However, it was felt in general that this question was answered better than in previous years.
- 34** Few candidates made any accurate observations, eg it is doubled an octave higher and is played in repeated quavers (or faster / shorter notes) at the higher octave.
- 35** There were a large number of points that could be made here (see below), and most candidates gained some credit, though very few full gained full marks.
- [3/4 time; one in a bar / fast crotchet tempo; strong melody with “oom-cha-cha” accompaniment’ slightly early second beat in the accompaniment; regular phrases; distinct sections with new melodies; mixture of legato and staccato articulation; homophonic texture; emphasis on first beat of the bar.]
- 36** Johann Strauss. A very large number of candidates suggested Haydn.

MUSIC

Paper 0410/02
Prepared Listening

General comments

The questions on world music in **Section D** were generally well answered, with most candidates being able to apply the knowledge they had gained in lessons to answering the questions on the recorded extract. However, the performance of many candidates in **Section E** was far less good than last year; this is disappointing, as it was felt last year that the Notes for Guidance on set works had benefited many Centres. In Centres where the candidates had thoroughly learned their set work, the answers were frequently excellent, with examples of full or almost full marks being gained. However, there were a worrying number of papers where it appeared that the candidates knew almost nothing at all about the set work.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION D

Music D1

- 37** (a) Shō. Well answered.
- (b) Well answered by those candidates who answered part (a) correctly. It is a mouth organ with 17 bamboo pipes which are blown. Holes in the pipes are covered by fingers to change pitch.
- 38** Reasonably well answered: Hichiriki, kakko, ryuteki.
- 39** As in Paper 1, many candidates do not properly understand musical texture, and many use technical terms incorrectly. This question was often poorly answered. Examiners were looking for phrases such as the following: starts with chords, then there is a melody which is briefly doubled heterophonically; the music of the ryuteki is then monophonic, as is the biwa (with occasional doubled notes).
- 40** Most candidates gained some credit here. Examiners were looking for phrases such as the following: slow and free at the beginning; starts with the 'jo' section; heterophonic texture; use of repeated notes getting faster on the kakko; use of an ensemble with these particular instruments / there are many instruments; the instruments enter one after the other.

Music D2

- 41** Well answered: shakuhachi (ryuteki or komabue were accepted) and koto.
- 42** Reasonably well answered: glissando / portamento / slide / scoop / pitch-bending / vibrato / false-fingering / ghost-notes.
- 43** A variety of answers was given: eg the melody is played by the shakuhachi; the koto generally plays single notes which often double the melody.
- 44** Most candidates gained at least one mark, eg the koto is much more prominent; it is faster and more metrical.
- 45** Reasonably well answered. The following were all acceptable points: free metre; wide variety of phrase lengths; small number of instruments; through composed; there are no drums.

Music D3

- 46 Well answered: rabāb and suling.
- 47 Reasonably well answered: it starts at a fast tempo which is maintained for most of the extract before slowing down greatly at the end.
- 48 Many candidates gained some credit here. Examiners were looking for the following points: they play the nuclear theme / balungan; the saron barung and saron dēmung (or middle / low instruments) play a straightforward version of the melody in the middle of the texture; the saron panērus (or higher instruments) play each note of the theme twice / ornament the theme.
- 49 There were a number of points that could be made (see below), and most candidates gained some credit.

[There are alternating louder and quieter sections; this achieved through contrast of timbre as well as dynamic contrast: the higher metallophones drop out to leave the rabāb and suling as the prominent instruments in the quieter sections; the quieter sections are longer than the loud sections.]

Music D4

- 50 Well answered: bronze keys are struck with disc-headed sticks and bamboo resonators amplify the sound; they are metallophones.
- 51 A variety of answers: the low gong marks the beginning and end of the rhythmic cycle known as a gongan; the other gongs divide the music into ketegs.
- 52 Most candidates gained some credit, eg starts in unison; drums join in followed by the main melody; heterophonic texture; variations in tempo.

SECTION E

Music E1

- 53 Reasonably well answered (Allegro).
- 54 (a) B major. Reasonably well answered.
(b) Dominant. Reasonably well answered.
- 55 Well answered: the repeated demisemiquavers represent the thunder; the ascending scales and triplets in the solo part represent the lightning.
- 56 C sharp minor. A variety of answers.
- 57 Tonic pedal. A variety of responses.
- 58 Birdsong. Well answered.
- 59 Most candidates gained at least one mark: trills; repeated pairs of notes; short melodic fragments; three solo violins in a high register.

Music E2

- 60 C# - C# (semitone above middle C). A variety of answers, often incorrect.

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	Instrument(s)	Music
Rustling of leaves and branches	Orchestral violins	Continuous dotted rhythm.
Goat-herd	Solo violin	Lyrical, legato melody. Sustained notes.
Dog	Viola	Marked 'always forte'. Two note motif representing the dog barking.

A wide variety of answers were given here. Worryingly, the flute was often mentioned as one of the instruments.

62 Very few candidates answered correctly: *G sharp minor*, Perfect.

63 Binary. Ritornello was a common incorrect response.

Schumann: Piano Concerto (1st Movement)

Music E3

64 Oboe. Many candidates stated clarinet.

65 Reasonably well answered. Points which could be made included: ends with an perfect cadence rather than imperfect; addition of passing note in the left hand; small change in harmony; acciaccatura 'skip' in the left hand at the start.

66 Reasonably well answered: play on the G string.

67 Reasonably well answered: repetition and sequence.

68 Well answered. Examiners were expecting some of the following points: starts with the same melody / Clara theme but in a different key; there is then a descending octave followed by a rising leap of a tenth; monothematic.

69 Most candidates gained some credit. Examiners were looking for some of the following points: there is no orchestral introduction / first exposition; monothematic; use of variation technique to change the main theme throughout the movement; written out cadenza.

Music E4

70 (a) Well answered. C major

(b) Well answered. Relative major.

71 (a) Well answered First subject / exposition / bar 4.

(b) Well answered, with many candidates gaining full marks. Examiners were expecting some of the following points: it is in 6/4 time; it is in A flat major; the tempo has changed to Andante espressivo; it is accompanied by arpeggios / broken chords; it is a variation; there is a tonic pedal.

72 A variety of answers: F – E flat.

73 Well answered. [End of the exposition (codetta) and beginning of the development.]

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/03 Performing</p>

General comments

A wide range of extremely interesting performances was submitted this year; the Moderators greatly enjoy hearing some of the wonderful music-making that is happening in the different Centres around the world.

Solos

As in previous years, most of the solo performances were adequately matched to the candidates' abilities, allowing them to demonstrate a range of musical and technical skills. However, some improvised solos, particularly for drum-kit, demonstrated a very limited range of skills indeed. There is no reason not to submit improvised solos, but Centres are asked to consider the sort of repertoire that is prescribed for Grade 4 and 5 Drum Kit syllabuses when advising candidates and assessing their work – the simple, repetitive patterns that some candidates performed do not even begin to explore the range of technical and musical skills possible on the drum kit, but were marked as if they were equivalent to far more advanced notated compositions. The same problem arose for some guitarists, who played pieces consisting of nothing but a repeated four-bar chord sequence with no serious technique needed at all.

Ensembles

It is again necessary to state that the advice given repeatedly over the last few years is ignored by some Centres. Performing as a member of an ensemble is one of the most exciting things a young musician can be involved in, and should be seen as central to the whole syllabus, not an exam "obstacle" to be overcome. Many Centres continue to provide excellent and imaginative ensemble performing opportunities for their candidates, which perfectly match their abilities. However, there are still far too many examples where candidates who have demonstrated excellent instrumental or vocal skills in the solo section performed ensemble music which was so undemanding – or in some cases not even an ensemble – that they completely failed to demonstrate their true ability, and gained far fewer marks than might otherwise have been the case.

Once again, there were a number of pieces submitted as ensemble performances which were in fact solos, and the Moderators were forced to significantly reduce these candidates' marks. It is necessary to repeat almost exactly the advice given last year: an ensemble performance should normally consist of three or more live performers; the candidate's part should not be consistently doubled, and the candidate should demonstrate true ensemble skills with the other players. A general rule of thumb is if the candidate's part could be described as a solo, then it is unlikely to qualify as an ensemble. For instance, some candidates played or sang pieces accompanied by two instruments (for instance piano and drums, or piano and bass), but they were still clearly performing as a soloist; in pieces like this, the accompanying instruments respond to the needs of the soloist, whereas in a true ensemble all the performers will be interacting with each other. Another problem which arose a number of times this year was vocal "duets" in popular or show styles which actually consisted of the singers singing in alternation – never together – and therefore demonstrating no ensemble skills. Exceptions to the need for at least three instruments include acting as an accompanist (e.g. on the piano, accompanying another instrumentalist or singer) and piano duets. If there is any doubt about the suitability of a piece, then please contact CIE who will be more than happy to provide guidance.

In all of these cases, the Moderators feel that better advice from Centres would have resulted in significantly higher marks for some candidates.

It is again necessary to remind some Centres that where an ensemble consists of more than one instrument or voice of the same type, it is impossible for the Moderator to know which performer is the candidate if no further information (specifically sheet music) is provided by the Centre.

Assessment

It is pleasing that many Centres mark their candidates' performances realistically and accurately, taking the distance training materials as a benchmark standard, but there was a significant increase this year in the number of Centres who assessed the coursework far too leniently, at all levels of the ability range. Centres are reminded that to be gaining the highest marks, candidates need to perform for at least four minutes, at approximately Grade 4 or 5 level. In some cases, performances which demonstrated hardly any musical or technical skills at all were still being given marks in double figures. Please consider the statements in the assessment criteria very carefully.

Some Centres include very useful comments supporting the marks awarded in the space provided on the working marksheet. It would be extremely helpful if all Centres did this, commenting on the performance submitted, not the perceived progress of the candidate during the course. The assessment must focus objectively and exclusively on the performance that is sent for moderation. It is vital that this working marksheet is included in the coursework package. It has become necessary to ask that Centres check the addition and transfer of marks more carefully in future submissions – there were numerous arithmetical errors this year.

There are still some Centres which persist in using half marks; please only use whole numbers.

Presentation of coursework

Most Centres organised the recordings effectively, with clear announcements of candidates' details on cassette tapes, and clear track listings for performances submitted on CD. Centres must check the final version of the tape/CD they submit: in some cases the CD did not work at all, and there were a number of recordings this year which were incomplete. Please try to record the performances in a room which is affected as little as possible by external noise or interruptions within the room itself. It is again necessary to remind some Centres that CDs must be finalised properly so that they can be played on a stereo, not just on a computer. A number of cassette tapes arrived in Cambridge almost completely broken as a result of being posted without adequate packaging – please put tapes into a small padded envelope, or protect with bubble-wrap.

There were a very large number of Centres this year who submitted the coursework without any accompanying sheet music. It is a requirement of the syllabus that copies of the sheet music should be sent, with the sole exception of music which has been improvised. It is extremely difficult to moderate ensemble performances in particular when there is no sheet music to clearly show the candidates' parts.

Centres are reminded that the performing and composing coursework must be sent in separate packages, and that a separate recording is needed for each.

MUSIC

<p>Paper 0410/04 Composing</p>
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General comments

There was the usual wide variety of pieces in this year's submissions.

The general quality of work was very variable indeed. Some Centres produced submissions that were as good as – possibly better than – any that have been presented in the past. In other Centres the work was of a very poor standard indeed. The average standard seemed rather lower than it has often been.

It was encouraging to observe clear evidence that the best candidates had followed a well-planned and purposeful course of study. However, a significant number of candidates seem to have been left to their own devices, and to have floundered as a result. It is important that all candidates receive appropriate guidance at all stages in the composing process; some appear to have received little or none.

Assessment

Most Centres were generally consistent in their internal marking, and the rank order of candidates was usually correct. However, many Centres were lenient in their marking, sometimes by a substantial margin.

Scores

There was a noticeable increase in the number of scores produced using computer notation programs such as Finale or Sibelius. Most of these looked very impressive and had received full marks. However, closer inspection often revealed serious shortcomings in terms of the correct grouping of notes and/or rests, the correct beaming of quavers and semiquavers and other editorial matters. Candidates who use such programs still need to learn how to apply the normal rules of music theory, which other candidates demonstrate through their handwritten scores.

Very few candidates this year had relied on computer-generated ideas produced by programs such as Cakewalk, Cubase or Reason. This was a marked improvement on last year.

The small number of candidates who compose genuine examples of electro-acoustic music, which cannot be notated conventionally, still need to submit something to take the place of a score. On its own, a simple print-out of the computer screen diagrams is insufficient for these purposes: a written account of the composing process, explaining the decisions taken in the course of creating the music, is needed in addition.

Recordings

Recordings of pieces were roughly evenly split between live performances and synthesised ones taken direct from a computer notation. In almost all cases the live performances were superior to the synthesised ones – not because they were without mistakes, but because they brought the music to life in a way that a computer never can. This was true even when the live performances were really quite inaccurate; the Moderators could always tell what was intended, and could invariably form a better impression of how the piece was meant to sound than they could with a note-perfect but arid performance generated by the computer.

In some cases where recordings had been generated from the computer, all parts were played using a piano sound, even when the pieces were intended for an ensemble of orchestral instruments. This does not give a true impression of the intended sound of the composition and is unhelpful both to the candidates concerned and to the Moderators. If candidates are using notation or sequencing programs, they need to learn how to set the correct sounds so that the music plays back as it should.

There was a marked increase in the number of Centres that submitted the recordings on CD rather than on cassette. CDs are always preferable: it is important, however, to stress the need for CDs to be playable on standard domestic hi-fi equipment. Centres are asked to ensure that they use **CD-R** format only, and do not submit recordings on CD-RW. Similarly, Centres are specifically asked not to submit recordings using Windows Media Player or similar formats that can only be played on a computer, since the Moderators do not necessarily have access to the same software that was used in the production of the CD.

Specific Problems

1 Administration

There were several instances of the following problems:

- Incorrect addition of marks;
- Incorrect transcription of marks from individual Working Mark Sheets to the Summary Mark Sheet and/or to the MS1 Computer Mark Sheet;
- Illegible marks on the MS1;
- Omission of important documentation (e.g. no individual Working Mark Sheets, no Moderator's copy of the MS1);
- Performing work (sheet music and/or recordings) enclosed in the same envelope with the Composing submission

Without all the correct forms, correctly and fully completed, the Moderators' task becomes very difficult, or even impossible.

2 Incomplete Submissions

In a significant number of cases there was no recording of one or more of a candidate's compositions, and no explanation of the omission. Centres are reminded that **all** pieces must be recorded.

3 Quality of Recordings

The recordings submitted by some Centres were of a very poor quality indeed. In some cases the level at which the recording had been made was so low that it was impossible to hear the music. In others, the levels varied to an unacceptable degree from piece to piece, or between spoken announcements and the recorded music. It would be very helpful to the Moderators if Centres could make every effort to ensure that the playback volume does not need to be adjusted at the start of successive tracks. There were a few cases where the levels of certain tracks were so high that there was a danger of damage to loudspeakers, and severe distortion of the candidates' music. It does not help the candidates if recordings are so quiet that the music is inaudible, or so loud that it is unintelligible because of the distortion.

4 Order of Pieces in the Submission

Most Centres had taken trouble to ensure that the recordings were grouped together by candidate (in the correct order of candidate number), that the individual pieces on the CD or cassette were in the correct order of numbering (piece 1 first, then piece 2 and finally piece 3), and that the scores were also arranged in this order. However, there were still cases where the scores were in an apparently random order, or where it was impossible to tell which piece had been assessed as piece 1, piece 2 or piece 3.

5 Holistic Adjustments

Many Centres take the opportunity offered in the current syllabus to make a holistic adjustment of the total mark for one or more candidates. These adjustments are almost always used to increase the mark, but the Moderators invariably find that the unadjusted mark was more accurate.