

**GCE**

**Music**

Advanced GCE A2 **H542**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS **H142**

**OCR Report to Centres June 2014**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

© OCR 2014

## CONTENTS

**Advanced GCE Music (H542)**

**Advanced Subsidiary GCE Music (H142)**

### OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
G351 Performing Music 1	1
G352 Music Composing 1	3
G353 Introduction to Historical Study in Music	6
G354 Performing Music 2 (Interpretation)	13
G355 Composing 2	16
G356 Historical and Analytical Studies in Music	21

# G351 Performing Music 1

## 1. General Comments:

The OCR Visiting Examiners Panel for performing units is grateful to centres for the amount of preparation that goes into an examining visit: Teachers, accompanists, administrators and parents all contribute to the event, whether just for a few hours or several days. The help our examiners receive extends from the date of first contact (to discuss dates), through the provision of programmes and music (including timings and grades, at least a week in advance of the examination) to the smooth running of the timetable and hospitality on the actual day. Matters were complicated this year by the unusual placement of Easter in the calendar.

It was evident from the very many high-standard performances that were heard that many centres had considered, practised and prepared their performances well in advance, often aided by supportive and skilful accompanists or ensemble players. While very few centres opted to have an audience present for the performing aspects (it is not allowed for the Discussion or the improvisation option in Section C) in many there was a sense of occasion.

Please note that, as part of the monitoring of examiners' work, on some visits two examiners are present. Again, OCR is grateful to centres that have welcomed two examiners rather than one.

All sections of the examination are recorded for possible future use in further monitoring or centre applications for the Enquiries After Results process. Centres are reminded that no other audio or video-recordings are permitted.

The photocopies of the music provided by centres form part of the folder of work for each candidate and will eventually be destroyed.

## Section A

Examiners enjoyed the wide range of instruments and styles presented again this year, usually with careful regard to the stipulation that the programme "should last no longer than eight minutes" and also demonstrating "a range of techniques". Playing two very similar pieces may not achieve this range or allow the candidate to demonstrate their abilities and understanding of styles to the full. Care is also needed that the music selected is not too difficult since the candidate should be able to show "secure knowledge...and fluency of the programme". In some cases the opening section or first page of a piece was confident but poise, accuracy and technical control lapsed in later sections or when the piece changed key or texture, and performances became anxious and lost fluency. In some instances this struggle for notes and fluency prevented much in the way of details and understanding of the style from emerging.

Any backing tracks used should be audible to the examiner and not just the soloist, and levels for amplified instruments should not be set and controlled by teachers or other candidates during the recital – these remain the responsibility of the candidate, assessed under "Aural and Stylistic Understanding".

The examiners would like to see the pieces/songs presented as a set – the examiner will not "hold" the performance while he/she writes comments – the candidates should feel free to pace their presentation and their transitions between items. This is a recital performance with a sense of occasion and ideally with as little disruption between items as possible. There were some disturbances caused by things such as missing music, an absent page-turner and even uncertainty about the order of items.

Pieces written with an accompaniment or backing should be performed that way to ensure an understanding of the full texture of the music and so that a cogent "whole" is presented: playing

only piano accompaniments or guitar accompaniments with no solo/vocal line will not achieve this. Downloads from the internet or copies from guitar magazines should be marked up as fully as possible, with stave notation alongside tablature.

## Section B: Discussion

One of the AS Areas of Study is “The Expressive Use of Instrumental Techniques” (AO1) and this will very much drive the discussion. Candidates may refer to the music at any time (but not to other notes) and may also illustrate if they wish.

The Discussion will usually last between five and ten minutes, be conducted *in camera* (any audience for the Section A recital will have to leave) and will focus *only* on the pieces presented immediately before in recital. Candidates should be prepared to discuss aspects such as choice of programme, preparation of the pieces, the choice of expressive aspects such as tempo, phrasing, dynamics and colour, and technical aspects of their performance (such as bowing, amplification, breathing, fingering, pedalling – both *una corda* and *tre corde* and so on). There may be discussion of the use of associated performing conventions of the repertoire – for example the deployment of swung rhythms, ornamentation (cadential trills in Baroque repertoire for example, smears, bends etc), added dynamic contouring, improvised sections and so on. The candidates should also be able to appraise the effectiveness of their decisions in the performance.

Some candidates this year were unable to go beyond a broad discussion on tempo and volume – others, however were able to justify their decisions much more decisively in several parameters of the music, showing their individual response to the score and its challenges. The top mark band requires that answers to the questions posed be “detailed and informed” with “full and clear awareness of expressive choices”. Where listening to professional recordings is cited, the candidate should still be able to substantiate their *own* decisions and preferences that were deployed in their performances, rather than imitating uncritically. This aspect of performing and interpretation is developed in much greater depth in the *Viva Voce* of unit G354.

## Section C

Again this year the most popular options in this section were Option 1 - second instrument, and Option 2 - duet/ensemble, with relatively few examples of Option 3 (composing) and Option 4 (improvising).

There were some outstanding ensembles presented here – ranging from horn quartets to piano trios, from guitar bands to tuned percussion groups. Again OCR is grateful to those supporting players (whether peers or teachers or family members) who come in to support the candidates in their ensembles or accompanying, and also recognises that often the logistics of arranging larger ensembles can take some considerable preparation in advance. Sometimes the same ensemble and repertoire were presented by a number of candidates at the centre but please note that a separate performance (and therefore recording) is needed for each candidate: thus the same string quartet may have to play four times, possibly with the centre organising several Section C performances in a row (but please note that the Section A and Section B are inseparable).

Centres are reminded that the specification requires that “*the candidate’s part in any ensemble, duet or accompaniment should be clearly distinguishable from that of any other performers and sufficiently substantial to be individually assessable*”. Care is also needed with (usually) vocal duets that actually contain very little *duetting* passages – antiphonal exchanges only, or alternating extended solo passages do not allow ensemble skills fully to be demonstrated in this option.

# G352 Music Composing 1

## 1. General Comments:

There was a good variety of work submitted for G352 this year in both Sections A and B. Deadlines were mostly met and Special Consideration for late submissions was applied correctly. The majority of submissions completed the requirements of the specification regarding the number of exercises submitted for Section A and scores and recordings submitted for Section B. There were few clerical errors this year.

The presentation of the work was good and the efforts made by centres were appreciated. Queries regarding missing items or clarification of details on the exercises were dealt with swiftly and professionally by the majority of centres. Some CDs did not work or were damaged in transit, but these were replaced quickly by centres.

In Section A it is crucial that centres choose the correct exercises that will be most beneficial to their own candidates – these could change from year to year. The most successful centres offered a variety of genres and difficulty that was most appropriate for their own candidates. The more able candidates could be encouraged to complete more than the basic requirement of two exercises in full-texture and the minimum requirement length of an eight bar exercise. Some candidates submitted more than the requirement of the six most successful exercises completed during the course – this is not necessary. Preliminary exercises and exercises that only contain cadential progressions are not needed for this final submission.

Some centres have continued to include several hymn/chorale texture exercises – it is recommended that no more than two exercises in this genre are submitted. It is especially important that SATB style exercises are not the only full texture exercises included in the submissions. To achieve marks in the upper bands of the coursework criteria, moderators would be looking for a variety of genres and continuation of different textures together with correct recognition of harmonic pace.

There were often too many folk tunes included in submissions. Some were used as the only minor example and were more modal in concept. Tonality in folk tunes can be ambiguous and cause unnecessary problems for candidates.

Some exercises were not sourced from real music, as required in the specification, and were made up by the centre. All exercises should name the title and composer together with the date of completion of the exercise. There were several examples of the Timed Test exercise not being identified or dated. The inclusion of draft copies of the exercises is to be encouraged – however no more than two is necessary. As this is a coursework unit, it is very useful for moderators to see the amount of input and guidance given by the teacher.

Correct and appropriate incipit material included in the exercises is vital for candidates. All exercises should include at least two bars in full or two-part texture. Candidates should only be required to add a bass line to the melody with correct chord indications, or complete the exercise in full texture. Some incipit materials this year consisted of bass line only, melody and bass line, soprano and alto parts – too much harmonic implication is given and not accounted for in the final marks awarded by the centre.

Some centres included exercises in full texture that were completed in open score format. The more able candidates were often able to complete these well but less able candidates struggled with this format, especially in technique, and could have been given the option of short score format.

The Timed Test should reflect the skills learnt by candidates during the course. As with the choice of exercises, the most successful candidates completed exercises that were appropriate to their individual abilities. Exercises for this test should not have been completed by other candidates in the same cohort and it is recommended that the exercise should not be familiar to the candidates. It is expected that the standard achieved by the candidates in this test are taken into account when the final mark for this section is awarded. It is vital that the test is not returned to the candidate to be re-worked prior to submission.

In Section B there was a good selection of genres that really allowed candidates to submit compositions or arrangements in styles with which they were familiar and enjoyed. As in previous years, compositions were more popular than arrangements, although there were some good arrangements that allowed candidates to demonstrate an inventive quality to the original stimulus. However, there were also submissions that were mainly transcriptions with little added material included.

It was felt that commentaries were generally of a very good standard. Some were over-long and contained unnecessary screenshots of the candidates' own compositions/arrangements. More candidates are taking time to research their chosen genre, which in turn reflected on a real understanding of their own work. The less successful candidates were only able to cite their Prescribed Repertoire as listening material and this often had little influence on their own compositions/arrangements.

Technique is a section where candidates often do not have the skills with which to successfully develop and extend their initial ideas. It is probably the weakest area and one that needs the most careful guidance from the centre.

Many of the scores are now completed using Sibelius software and are very clearly presented. More care has been taken with regard to the addition of appropriate performance directions. However, the less successful candidates added little or no detail to their scores, which in turn was reflected in computer-generated recordings. Candidates should be advised to add this detail as an ongoing process to the completion of the score. It is very time consuming to add all detail after the score has been completed and is often inadequate or irrelevant.

## **2. Comments on Individual Sections:**

### Section A - The Language of Western Tonal Harmony

Centre assessment of this section, especially of Harmonic Language, was often very generous. It is expected that candidates are able to demonstrate the full range of language when marks are awarded in the top two bands of assessment. Too often, candidates were only able to demonstrate a secure use of primary chords, few or no dominant and supertonic 7ths. Cadential 6/4s were understood well but there were very few examples of the correct use of Passing 6/4s. Candidates should be advised not to use chords iii and vii unless their application is correct. There were examples of these chords being applied when modulations were not recognised.

It was felt that too many exercises in two-part textures were completed 'by ear' and the chord labelling was added after the bass line had been written. As a result, there were some awkward chord progressions and again evidence of the misuse of chords iii and vii. Some candidates were able to include chord vii correctly and it was pleasing to see V7d-Ib used in some exercises. Some centres encouraged the use of Neapolitan/French/German 6ths in certain exercises, but it would have been more beneficial to have understood the harmonic requirements of this unit.

In Technique, candidates were often able to recognise and treat modulations correctly. Textures were continued well when an appropriate incipit had been given. The more able candidates

were able to be a little more inventive with their textures and allowed them to develop alongside the melodic material. Many centres were able to give constructive help in the draft exercises without giving direct solutions of problem areas. When direct solutions are given, centres should take this help into account in their final assessments.

In Notation, there were examples of very good and accurate work. Despite the use of Sibelius software, errors can still be made and should be carefully checked. Many undetected errors were found in mislabelling of chords, including their inversions. It was pleasing to see so many encouraging comments on the coursework but these need to be accurate. It was disappointing at times to see comments and marks that were incorrect and gave the wrong feedback to the candidates.

## Section B - Instrumental Techniques

Centre assessment of this section was generally more accurate. As previously mentioned, the more successful work was achieved when candidates had undertaken a broad amount of listening or performing that in turn reflected on their own compositions/arrangements. When candidates are able to work with a strong knowledge of appropriate materials, it is more likely that they will be able to develop and extend their initial ideas through a range of techniques.

Instruments were often well chosen in this section. Generally the more successful candidates chose quartets or quintets. Working with smaller groups at this level gave the candidates the opportunity to really understand their chosen medium. There were, however, some excellent submissions using larger forces but too often when too many instruments were chosen, this led to unnecessary doubling and a misunderstanding of the capabilities of all the instruments. More candidates were including instrument-specific techniques that were relevant to their compositions and enabled candidates to further explore a range of textures through their correct usage.

There were many compositions this year that fell far too short of the required three minutes in length – some lasting just over 1'00". In these cases, this mostly affects the Technique section where candidates have not been able to fully develop their ideas. Some compositions were chosen requiring a very slow tempo – this is quite acceptable but the specification requirements are still the same and candidates need to be aware that the composition works as an entity when only submitting a work of forty or fifty bars. Structures of compositions/arrangements were often very clear, but some candidates were only able to generate length through excessive doubling and repetition. Here again, knowledge through detailed listening should direct candidates to understand how to use and extend their initial ideas.

Scores were generally presented to a very good standard. They were clear and accurate regarding notation but often lacked consistent performance directions. Most CDs worked, the preferred format for moderators being Audio rather than Data. Candidates should produce an individual CD to be included in their coursework, rather than centres submitting just one for the whole centre.

Overall, centre assessment is often too generous in Section A, choosing marks in the top bands, where clearly candidates are not including the requirements of the Specification, and applying the incorrect marking criteria. There are now resources available to assist centres in the choice of exercises for this section – these can be found on the OCR CPD Training Hub. Candidates offer a wide variety of genres for Section B and the standard achieved by them is often outstanding and a pleasure to hear.

## G353 Introduction to Historical Study in Music

### 1. General Comments:

Examiners' reports have repeatedly emphasised the need for candidates to ensure consistency of performance across all three sections of this paper if they wish to secure high overall marks. It remains a cause for concern that a significant number of candidates who demonstrate clear aural awareness and high levels of security in relation to aural perception in their answers to questions on "unprepared" music in Section A achieve much poorer levels of security in their performance in Sections B and C.

In theory, candidate performance in Sections B and C should be stronger than in Section A, given the fact that these sections are assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding in relation to prescribed repertoire that should have been studied throughout at least two terms. Examiners are rightly surprised when candidates seem to be unaware of even basic detail of parts of the music with which they should be thoroughly familiar.

A significant key to familiarity with this repertoire must be repeated attentive listening in an age when much listening to music is undertaken in a more passive manner. Study of this subject at GCE level means that candidates have made a conscious decision to engage with the subject at an advanced level, and in order to do this their listening must be attentive and carried out on a consistent basis so that high levels of aural familiarity with the detail of the music are achieved.

Candidates studying music today have numerous advantages in terms of ease of access to music, not just in the concert hall, but also via portable music devices and computer and tablet downloads. Taking advantage of this in order to broaden and deepen listening experience, especially in relation to the prescribed repertoire at AS level, will provide a secure foundation for improving results in Sections B and C of the paper.

There are encouraging signs of progress: this year examiners were very pleased with the level of accuracy demonstrated in the demanding melodic dictation questions. Many candidates were able to secure high marks as the result of completely accurate answers, or answers that contained only a relatively minor error. It is to be hoped that this level of accuracy will be maintained. Candidates are also demonstrating greater levels of perception in relation to the comparison of two performance recordings of the printed score extract in Section B.

This year's change of prescribed orchestral repertoire appears to have caused relatively few problems for candidates, and centres are reminded that the jazz repertoire will change for 2015. Lists of new prescribed repertoire (up to 2018) for G353 are available on the OCR website, and centres are reminded that repertoire beyond 2014 is not contained in the older printed versions of the OCR Music specification. Examiners appreciate that recordings of jazz repertoire can be taken out of circulation without prior notice by recording companies, but at the time of writing all the specified jazz recordings for future specifications are available as CD recordings and also as internet downloads from iTunes.

## 2. Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

### Section A

**Extract 1A** HAYDN, *Sonata in D, Hob.XVI:37*, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, bars 0<sup>2</sup>-20 & 73<sup>2</sup>-102. Christine Schornsheim (2004), *Capriccio WDR 3 49 413 (2005)*, disk 9, track 12, 00'00" – 01'14" & 02'40" – 03'18" [Total length of recorded extracts: 01'52"]

- 1 Most candidates recognised the perfect cadence from bar 7 to bar 8a.
- 2 Examiners accepted either A major or the dominant as acceptable answers, but there were many candidates who stated that the music at bar 8a had modulated to a minor key. Careful listening to the sound of the chord in this bar would have made the quality of the tonal centre clear.
- 3 Although many candidates placed the dynamic indication appropriately (at the final quaver in bar 12), many positioned this at the start of bar 13 or too early in bar 12. Reference back to the quaver anacrusis at the start of this extract, together with attentive listening to the dynamic change in the recorded performance should have made it clear where the indication needed to be placed in the score.
- 4 Many able candidates were able to position all five chords accurately, but there was a degree of confusion over the relative positions of **V** and **V7b**, and also **I** and **Ic**. The placing of chord **IVb** was usually accurate. A keen listening focus on the bass line (deliberately not provided in the score) should have made clear the bass line at the points in question, and this in turn should have enabled candidates to differentiate between the root position chords and their inversions. In addition, the chord **Ic** in bar 19 occurs as part of a cliché **Ic-V7-I** progression that candidates are expected to have covered and engaged with as part of their study of Western Tonal Harmony in Unit G352.
- 5 Some candidates attempted to avoid any discussion of harmony and tonality and simply provided a description of the music from bar 20b to bar 28a. This received no credit except for references to harmony and/or tonality. Many answers recognised the tonal centre of d minor at the start of the passage and the move to F major (the relative major) at the end. Relatively few answers referred to more intricate detail such as the interrupted cadences (bars 21-22 and 25-26) and the imperfect cadence in d minor (bar 23-24).
- 6 This question was answered well by many candidates, and the best responses were able to demonstrate clear understanding of the ways in which the melodic motif was treated in the relevant section of the extract. Examiners were surprised that only a relatively small number of candidates made mention of the inversion of the motif at bar 28 and its truncation at bars 34, 35 and 37, although most responses noted the antiphonal response to the motif in the bass line at bar 37.
- 7 Examiners were pleased that many candidates produced completely accurate answers to this question. The melodic line was reasonably extended (as a bass part) and contained a tricky chromatic move right at the end of the passage, which many almost completely accurate answers failed to spot.
- 8 Answers to this question varied considerably and demonstrated a rather hazy awareness of musical texture on the part of many candidates. Examiners were

looking for references to precise detail in candidate answers, but few scripts secured full marks for this question. Many responses were too general, often providing a description of musical detail unrelated to aspects of texture. Responses that did secure credit frequently noted the left-hand octaves (bars 8 & 13-16), the use of block chords (e.g. bars 21-22 & 25-26), and two-part contrapuntal writing (bars 31-33).

- 9 As in Question 7, the chromatic movement in the line (bar 46) confused many weaker candidates, and many responses also missed the ascending interval of a 3<sup>rd</sup> in the middle of bar 47. Many able candidates produced completely accurate notations of the melodic line in answer to this question.
- 10 Examiners were surprised by the number of candidates who appeared not to recognise the Alberti bass accompaniment pattern that is a characteristic feature of much repertoire drawn from the period covered by this Unit. The most popular responses were “broken chord” and “arpeggio”, neither of which is correct.
- 11 Many candidates recognised the binary structure of the Unit and were able to provide a point of additional detail to support this recognition. Examiners accepted references to the repetition of sections and/or to the return of melodic material from “A” within the “B” section of the passage.
- Extract 1B** **CHRISTOPHER GUNNING, *Agatha Christie’s Poirot – Original music from the television series, Main theme (Hercule Poirot – The Belgian Detective)* (Orchard Music Ltd., 1990), Original recording - unnamed orchestra (1992), Virgin Records Ltd., VTDC 8 (1992), track 1, 00’00” - 01’15” & 01’46” – 02’29” [Total length of recorded extracts: 01’58”]**
- 12 Almost all candidates identified the saxophone as the instrument playing the melody, although there were differing views on the type of instrument used in the recording.
- 13 Many candidates displayed a degree of insecurity in relation to ornament recognition. Sadly, a common strategy appeared to be to latch onto the term “ornament” in the question wording then to write “trill” as the response at every possible point. Candidates are advised strongly to learn to recognise aurally the most common forms of musical ornament in preparation for questions such as this. In terms of acceptable responses, more candidates recognised the presence of an acciaccatura in bar 6 than the use of an upper mordent in bar 10.
- 14 This was quite a tricky melodic line and Examiners were very pleased to see so many completely accurate responses. Candidates who recognised that the start of the section repeatedly returned to the same note (G) avoided problems in the early part of this melody, but a number of responses failed to judge accurately the larger intervals in the progression of the line at bar 8.
- 15 Most candidates identified accurately the device used from bar 13 to bar 16 as an ascending sequence.
- 16 The accuracy of response in relation to this question was very pleasing, with a significant number of scripts securing maximum marks. The most common mistake was to confuse the respective placings of either Cm and C7, or C7 and G7. In the first example, attentive listening to the sound of the chord in the recording should have guided candidates to the correct response, while the printed melody of the score gave valuable clues to the “correct” chord that would fit with the melodic line at the start of bar 15 and in the second half of bar 17.

- 17** Many answers to this question provided a basic description of the instruments playing, which was not required. Examiners were looking for specific detail of the accompaniment (which could be related to instrumentation, where this helped to clarify understanding or aid effective comparison with the previous section). The use of a rising arpeggio / broken-chord figure was a popular response, and many mentioned the semiquaver countermelody played by the piano. Attentive listeners noted that the strings played legato chords throughout the section, which was not the case in the earlier section.
- 18** This question was not answered as accurately as Examiners had been expecting. It was anticipated that an octave would prove an easy interval to recognise aurally, yet examiners saw many scripts that offered “Perfect 4<sup>th</sup>” or “Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>” as a valid response. Candidates need to ensure that they can recognise basic diatonic intervals accurately as part of their preparation for this Unit.
- 19** Many candidates appreciated the change of key, although not all scripts were able to identify the new key centre accurately. Responses tended to be less good at describing accurately the changes in interval direction or melodic shape that were required to secure a second mark for this question. Too many answers gave very superficial descriptions of a perceived alteration without providing any valid supporting detail to show understanding of the ways in which melodic change had been achieved.
- 20** Answers to this question frequently lacked detail that could demonstrate attentive listening. Many candidates failed to distinguish between scale and arpeggio patterns, and few scripts were able to describe accurately the piano imitation of the saxophone’s rising melodic motif using a dotted rhythm pattern.
- 21** Examiners were disappointed that many candidates gave “imperfect” as their response here, failing to recognise a clear interrupted cadence in the music.
- 22** Many candidates answered this multiple-choice question accurately, although pattern **B** was a popular (incorrect) alternative.
- 23** Although many candidates received 1 mark for recognition of a pedal note, a smaller number of answers secured the full 2 marks by describing this fully as a dominant pedal.
- 24** This question was answered well by most candidates, with the material from bars 3 and 4 being a popular point of comment, in addition to the rising arpeggio figure from bars 20-26 that reappeared in bar 48.
- 25** Too many candidates tried unsuccessfully to produce complex structural patterns to describe the passage. Examiners were looking for recognition of the basic ternary / ABA structure of Passage 1i, and the perception that “B” material does not appear in Passage 1ii. Additional information offered by many candidates included references to an introduction in Passage 1i and an outro/coda in Passage 1ii.

**Section B**

**Extract 2** HANDEL, *Water Music Suite no.2 in D, HWV349, No.12 (Alla Hornpipe)*, bars 40 to 74.

**Extract 2A:** Kubelik, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (1963), Deutsche Grammophon Galleria 419 861-2 (1963), track 11, 02'11" – 03'13" [Length of extract: 01'02"]

**Extract 2B:** McGegan, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra (1987), Harmonia Mundi Gold, HMG 507010 (2008), track 17, 01'52" – 02'42" [Length of extract: 00'50"]

- 26 (a) This question was answered well, with almost all candidates recognising the trill symbol.
- (b) Most candidates understood the meaning of the term *da capo*, although it was clear that some candidates had not researched the meaning of this term printed in the score.
- 27 (a) The question identified a definite instrumental part, yet one of the most popular responses was "hemiola", suggesting that candidates had learned about Handel's use of hemiola in this movement, but had not distinguished accurately between the use of this device and the syncopation that occurred in the passage identified by the question.
- (b) Most scripts that produced accurate answers to **Question 29(a)** were able to identify a further use of syncopation accurately.
- 28 Examiners were pleased to see so many completely accurate answers to this question. The most common errors included failure to add accidentals (sharps) to the first two notes in bar 16, and the transposition of the passage upward by an octave.
- 29 Many answers failed to secure credit for responses here because they did not address the elements of harmony and tonality. Among responses that did focus on the appropriate aspect of the music, many candidates were able to identify the key centre and a perfect cadence at the end of the passage, but relatively few candidates provided further detail, and only the most able candidates recognised the use of a V7d-Ib progression at the start of the section. All the chords used by Handel in this section should have been thoroughly familiar to candidates as a result of their exercises in Western Tonal Harmony for Unit G352. Candidates need to be aware of the need for them to make links between the composing, listening, and historical study aspects of the subject.
- 30 Candidates responded well to this question, and examiners saw very few answers that failed to demonstrate some evidence of accurate listening used to make comparisons between the recorded performances. The most able candidates were able to provide detailed references that revealed acute levels of aural perception and awareness of relevant issues of performance practice.
- 31 Not all candidates who identified the section accurately were aware of its basic overall structure, or of the place of the extract within the section.
- 32 Candidates who knew the music well were able to provide suitable detail in their answers. Many scripts referred (incorrectly) to aspects of one of the following movements (most usually the Trumpet Menuet or the Lentement).

**Extract 3** **LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS HOT FIVE, *Hotter than that* (1927), from *Louis Armstrong – 25 Greatest Hot Fives & Hot Sevens*, ASV Living Era CD AJA5171 (1995), track 16, 01'19" – 01'54". [Length of recorded extract: 00'35"]**

- 33** Almost all candidates were able to identify the vocal style used by Armstrong as scat, although examiners were less impressed by candidates' submission of the term "scatting" as an acceptable response.
- 34** Candidates who were familiar with the recording were able to refer to an appropriate level of detail in their answers to this question. The use of syncopation and vibrato were common aspects mentioned in responses, and better answers made reference to the links between Armstrong's melody in this section and the melody of his earlier trumpet solo.
- 35** Most candidates answered this question well, although some responses betrayed a degree of confusion of the respective rôles of the banjo and the guitar. Very few answers made reference to the break at the mid-point of the chorus.
- 36** Some answers to this question suggested that the piano entered at the point in question, providing a link to the following section. This was not accurate, and examiners were seeking a valid description of the music that formed the antiphonal imitative exchange between Louis Armstrong's scat vocalisations and the responding guitar melody. Perceptive candidates made reference to the absence of accompaniment at this point in the music.
- 37** Candidates who researched comprehensively the background of this item of prescribed repertoire should have discovered that 1927 was a particularly busy year in terms of Louis Armstrong's relationship with Okeh records. He visited their recording studios for three sessions (each spread over several days) during that year, including two sessions with his Hot Five and one with his Hot Seven. Given this information, it was not surprising that examiners asked candidates at what point in this productive year of studio activity for Armstrong the prescribed recording was made.
- 38** Most candidates were aware of Armstrong's links with Okeh Records, but examiners also accepted more formal references to The General Phonograph Corporation.

### **Section C**

- 39** This question generally produced evidence of knowledge of the range of brass instruments used by each composer, and most candidates were aware of the limitations of the instruments used by Handel and changes in approaches to performance with brass instruments that had taken place by Mozart's time. The best answers went further than this and were able to demonstrate clearly how these limitations and performance practice related to specific detail within the two prescribed works. It was clear that many candidates had gained an awareness of the sound of performances with authentic brass instruments, and many candidates who has listened acutely to these recordings were able to write about (for example) the changing tone quality of individual notes across the range of the horn in Mozart's concerto.
- 40** Most candidates were aware of the nature of Beethoven's orchestra, and many answers compared his forces to those used by Mozart. In general, candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of salient features of Beethoven's orchestral writing,

most notably in relation to extended instrumental ranges and the use of contrasting dynamic levels, but only the better answers were able to give a convincing sense of the music in relation to its time. Many felt that Beethoven's orchestra was much larger than that used by his contemporaries, whereas in the prescribed movement, the forces used are relatively conservative, even though Beethoven's use of resources is highly individual.

- 41 This question was answered least well of the three, largely because so many candidates did not engage with the demands of the question and produced a pre-prepared history of the development of recording technology. Examiners were looking for much broader awareness of the impact of the recording companies on the development of jazz music, and the prescribed repertoire this session provided useful examples of the ways in which recording companies had been influential in shaping the style and production of jazz: the formation of a "studio" ensemble (rather than a pre-existent touring group of players) by the Okeh recording company for Louis Armstrong, and the widespread publicity given to Miles Davis (in particular surrounding the release of the *Birth of the Cool* album by Capitol Records) providing notable examples.

## G354 Performing Music 2 (Interpretation)

### 1. General Comments:

It has been a pleasure and privilege listening to performances on a wide variety of instruments and in a diversity of styles. As this part of the A-level qualification often represents the culmination of many dedicated years of practice and support from teachers and families, we wish to acknowledge this and to congratulate candidates and thank teachers and families for their support.

Examiners have reported very positively on the overall administration of the examinations this year. Most centres adhered to the administrative requirements for which examiners are grateful. So that there is no doubt, these requirements are:

- Timetables, with candidate names and numbers, details of repertoire (including grade level), and music should be sent to the examiner at least one week prior to the examination
- Candidates should be timetabled for c. 35 minutes
- Accompanists need to be provided
- There should be no duplication of material between G351 and G354
- Recitals should last up to 15 minutes
- Centres are politely reminded to build in some time at the start of the examining session for examiners to read the VVPFs.

### 2. Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Section A: Recital

A wide range of instruments (from counter-tenor to tabla) was offered and some superb performances were heard with accompanying of professional standard. Whilst much is well in place for this unit, the following are a few points that it would be wise for centres to revisit:

- The recital repertoire needs to be focused: the music itself needs to be of the same musical style. There are still instances where the focus chosen is too wide – e.g. “Flute Music Through the Ages” or “Songs from Twentieth Century Musicals”. As the Twentieth Century contains a huge variety of stylistic approaches, this is too wide a time frame for any instrument. A tight, clearly defined style needs to be apparent. If centres are in doubt, they are strongly advised to contact OCR, as unfocused recitals will affect the marks awarded in both sections of the examination.
- Centres are reminded that in order to access the full range of marks, candidates need to perform music of at least grade 6 level. However, there is nothing to be gained by performing music that is too difficult for them. Also, centres are asked to check grade levels carefully prior to submission.
- There were quite a lot of very long recitals this year; up to 15 minutes is stipulated in the specification and this is the expected maximum.

- As stated above, candidates need to provide copies of the music being performed. For recitals that are largely improvised, candidates do need to provide details of the musical stimulus for the pieces being performed. It is in the candidates' interest to do this, as examiners cannot award the full range of marks otherwise.
- Recitals need to make full musical sense: a complete texture needs to be presented. This is particularly relevant for guitar or drum kit recitals where candidates need to make sure that the melody of the vocal line is present in some form in the texture if the repertoire includes songs.
- Recitals should be presented with candidate as soloist, accompanist or as part of an ensemble. Recitals should not mix these disciplines. It is perfectly acceptable to present self-accompanied recitals though. Candidates can choose whether to be assessed on one of the instruments they perform on, or both.
- Balance and amplification levels need to be checked and kept at an appropriate level by the candidate, as this forms part of the assessment criteria.
- Arrangements and transcriptions can be acceptable, but it is advisable to check that recordings on the candidate's instrument are available to compare for Section B.
- AO1 of the specification states candidates should "Interpret musical ideas with technical and expressive control and a sense of style and awareness of occasion and/or ensemble". This means that examiners will be expecting candidates to perform with the same sense of occasion that they would in a concert, presenting a continuous programme with the minimum of disruption for stage management.

#### Section B: *Viva Voce*

This section of the unit allows candidates to demonstrate their preparation and performance in four areas:

- Understanding of their chosen focus area
- Awareness of different interpretations of music of their focus area
- Justification for their own interpretative choices
- Self-reflection on their own performance

The first of these points relates particularly to AO3 where candidates are asked to "demonstrate understanding of, and comment perceptively on, the structural, expressive and contextual aspects of music". This is where examiners will explore the candidate's grasp of their focus area not only in terms of the language of its music (including AOS Tonality) but also its context. It is probably this area of the *viva* that is least well answered at present, with most candidates demonstrating insufficient depth of understanding of their focus area, including historical context. Examiners have reported that research is often minimal and is mostly confined to cursory comments gleaned from uninformed websites. Centres are strongly asked to encourage and help candidates to access reputable resources of substance, including books, in order to broaden their contextual understanding of their chosen focus.

With reference to the second point, examiners will expect candidates to have listened to at least two different performances (recorded or live) of music from their chosen focus area on the instrument on which they performed in Section A. They will be expected to discuss their comparative findings not only in terms of the more obvious features of tempo and dynamics, but in more depth including different approaches to tone production, articulation, phrasing, diction,

effects etc. depending on the candidate's instrument. Too often here, candidates do not delve deeply enough or with sufficient detail into the performances they have listened to.

The third area then explores ways in which the candidates have learned from their listening: which aspects of the recordings they have listened to they have taken on board, or what they have rejected – and why. This discernment is particular to A2 and is what sets it apart from AS, where candidates can listen if they wish, but are not expected to justify their decisions as they do at A2.

Finally, candidates will need to be able to reflect objectively on their performance and discuss the merit of their interpretative choices.

In preparation for this section of the unit, and to aid both the candidate and the examiner, candidates are encouraged to complete a VVPF (*Viva Voce* Preparation Form) which can be found on the OCR website. This form allows candidates to record their research on both the focus area itself and the comparative listening they have done. It then forms a useful starting point for the examiner's questions. It is perfectly acceptable for the candidate to have a copy in the exam too as an *aide memoire*, but they are not advised to bring in pre-prepared answers as this will hinder them rather than help; the *viva* is an organic dialogue that is a result of the examiner's questions and the candidate's responses.

## G355 Composing 2

### 1. General Comments:

Moderators have been pleased to note a general sense of increased confidence in the work of candidates in both their Stylistic exercises and Composing work.

This report aims to clarify aspects of the work that enabled candidate success and will refer also to the application of the assessment criteria by teachers.

Moderators are grateful to those centres that take care in the presentation of documents and portfolios of the coursework submissions, and particularly in regard to addition and transcribing of marks correctly.

Many teachers carefully annotate candidate exercises in both their final and draft forms, allowing the moderator to evidence the teaching and learning dialogue throughout the course. It is less appropriate to submit fair copies with annotation, which only highlights the positive aspects of a candidate's submission, failing to identify any misunderstandings or errors in the work.

Centres that evaluate their candidates' coursework carefully by identifying achievements, as well as shortcomings, in their comments on the coursework cover sheet, were generally more accurate in their assessments.

The Moderator's Report is a personalised document that gives important feedback to a centre on the assessment and work of their candidates. Guidance explaining that exercises may be inappropriately selected, for example, should be acted upon.

### 2. Comments on Section A: Stylistic Techniques

Moderators have seen submissions from all of the eight options of this Section this year; the most popular choice continues to be Chorale harmonisations in the style of J. S. Bach.

#### Centre Assessment

Centre assessment of the exercises was not always accurate when insufficient weighting was given to the exercise completed under controlled conditions.

The timed exercise is a very important part of the coursework submission, providing clear evidence of skills and understanding assimilated by the candidate and demonstrated when they work independently under controlled conditions. Centres frequently over-estimated the achievement of candidates when the evidence in the timed exercise fell far short of that demonstrated in the exercises completed during the course.

In general, it was noted that many centres could take greater opportunities to fine-tune their assessment judgements by using the full range of marks within a grade band descriptor rather than opting for the highest mark.

#### Aspects of good practice for all stylistic options

Candidates will benefit from the centre's careful selection of appropriate exercises. The following general points of good practice are important.

- An accurate incipit, complete in all parts is essential to give candidates a textural model on which to continue.

- Exercises should be taken from the actual works of specifically named composers
- The set of exercises should cover a good range of keys, both major and minor; in serialism, variety of row construction is important in the selection of exercise incipits.
- Original forces should be used, e.g. SATB for chorales; violins, viola and 'cello for string quartet; vocals, guitars, drum kit for Beatles songs if this is the original instrumentation; reduced forces are permissible for minimalism and serial exercises if the original has many instruments scored.
- Simplified piano reductions to accompany popular song, for example, are inappropriate and diminish the opportunity for candidates to show stylistic authenticity.
- Candidates who make a general study of the techniques of composers by preliminary and concurrent analysis of the chosen style have a foundation of knowledge and understanding, enabling them to assess the effectiveness of their own stylistic workings.
- Some candidates may choose to submit recordings of their exercises either as sequenced or live performances – this can be very helpful to candidates and assessors

The following points under each of the option headings are important traits and stylistic 'finger-prints' that are relevant to the nature of the coursework tasks undertaken

### **Two-part counterpoint of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century**

- Representative composers: Byrd, Lassus, Morley, Palestrina
- Idiomatic understanding of individual part writing, rhythmic interlinking of parts, directional movement between parts and the intervallic relationship between parts
- Imitation is a crucial technique for this style
- All standard considerations of text setting and underlay should be understood, especially word painting where appropriate.

### **Two-part Baroque counterpoint**

- Representative composers: Bach, Handel, Purcell
- Understanding the harmonic function of linear parts; idiomatic cadences
- The construction of idiomatic bass lines but also some facility writing an upper melodic part to a given bass line
- Flow, independence of rhythms, sequences, voice-leading; modulation
- More able candidates will complete some genuinely contrapuntal examples towards the end of the course; they will demonstrate understanding of transient modulation or more complex harmonic language such as the use of the diminished 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Chorale harmonisations in the style of J. S. Bach**

- All exercises should be unedited chorales of J. S. Bach
- Idiomatic chord progressions, recognition of essential modulation at pause chords
- Harmonic rhythm – options for treating minims
- Appropriate balance in the use of chord inversions with limited use of 6-4 chord
- Use of various forms of chord ii (or IV sometimes) as part of cadential formulae
- Vocal textures: characteristics of SATB lines; range / spacing / texture / consecutives; voice leading; idiomatic resolution of final cadences (falling leading note)
- More able candidates will be able to use suspensions correctly; they may be able to modulate to more distant keys and understand Bach's use of transient modulation; Tierce de Picardie is a stylish feature; occasionally, preserving a vocal line may be more important than observing the technical 'rule'

### **String quartets in the Classical style**

- Exercises should be drawn mainly from the works of Haydn and Mozart to ensure variety of speed, metre and figuration (avoid exclusive use of minuet extracts)
- Strong idiomatic cadences; use of I<sub>c</sub>; half-close cadences
- Identification of passing / non-harmony notes; modulation
- Use of medium: range and possibilities of instruments should be known including literacy with alto clef
- String quartet textures: instruments in pairs / directional bass line / avoiding viola / 'cello cross; consecutives avoided
- More able candidates will extend the range of language in their exercises to include Neapolitan / Augmented 6<sup>th</sup> and Diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chords; they may work with more demanding textural starting points and establish more independence where appropriate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> violin part.

### **Keyboard accompaniment in early Romantic style**

- Most centres will use Lieder (Schubert, Schumann) but instrumental exercises are also acceptable. Exercises from a single composer alone are unlikely to provide sufficient range of accompaniment figurations
- Essentially tonal, candidates will need to demonstrate an understanding of chromatic harmonies such as Augmented 6<sup>th</sup>, Neapolitan 6<sup>th</sup>, Diminished 7<sup>th</sup> and secondary dominants to have full access to marks under Language
- Important aspects of technique include: Understanding of text and appropriate response, voice leading, continuation of texture, understanding of modulation
- Piano writing should be idiomatic with good spacing; accompaniment patterns should show range and variety across the submission
- More able candidates will be confident in their use of chromatic features and include the writing of some linking and postlude piano passages

### **Popular Song**

- Of utmost importance is the selection of exercises that can be classified as representing a single broadly unified style: Songs of the Beatles OR 1930's Broadway Song (Gershwin, Porter et al.,) OR Songs of Abba OR 1970's soul are some examples
- Idiomatic instrumentation is essential in order to maximise marks – understanding of appropriate figurations for guitar / drum kit / piano, as appropriate, should be well evidenced
- Exercises should be selected so as to demonstrate a sufficient range of harmonic and technical understanding; words for vocal parts should always be included
- More able candidates will use a wide range of language within the chosen style and will be confident in their use of more advanced chords, modality and modulations
- More advanced work will include creative relationships between vocals and instrumental parts with opportunities for brief instrumental sections

### **Serial Technique**

- The works of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg will form the core of analytical study in seeking to understand and assimilate the many technical aspects of serialism
- The construction of the original row and its importance in regard to intervals and pitch patterns should be understood; uses of the row variants and any transpositions should be idiomatic.
- Staff notated row shapes are more helpful than letter name matrices

- The use of an authentic row by (with a short incipit complete in all parts) will form the basis of most exercises
- Other exercises might include a given *rhythmic* part with a self-composed row; an exercise in idiomatic orchestration using a piano from a work such as Schoenberg's Piano Suite Op. 25
- Characteristic textures and rhythmic styles; pointillism, imitation and canonic writing
- Submissions should always include annotation of serial workings and even a brief commentary as to the choice of rows used. The candidate is thereby able to demonstrate their understanding, in the same way as those working chorales, for example, would include chord symbols to indicate harmonic understanding.
- More able candidates will demonstrate an awareness of Klangfarbenmelodie, Hauptstimme and Nebenstimme

### Minimalism

- Exercises must be taken from the music of representative composers of the 'Early New York minimalists: Riley, Glass, Reich with close adherence to the original instrumentation
- Research and listening will enable students to grasp a sense of the various techniques minimalism presents. Minimalism is less a mechanical system than music almost always envisaged for an 'acoustic instrumental world', indeed, many of the rhythmic and phasing effects become lost when worked on a computer
- The notion of a given part may be more leniently interpreted in this option: depending on the focus of an individual exercise – it could be a chord sequence / a set of motifs / a loop for phasing plus additional instructions etc.
- Students may wish to experiment with the pre-recording of previously performed instrumental tracks after the manner of Steve Reich's numerous 'Counterpoint' pieces. A work such as 'Electric Counterpoint' provides exemplar material of pulsing contrasted with transforming motifs, and the way in which two very different textural ideas work their way to a conclusion
- Variety of textural styles can be demonstrated through incipits based on such contrasting incipits as may be found in Glass's Piano Solos or his String Quartets

### 3. Comments on Section B: Composing

Centre assessment was generally more accurate in this Section of the unit and the variety of responses revealed an impressive level of engagement from many candidates.

Commentaries were sometimes a little longer than is necessary but the quality of research and analytical listening often laid a firm foundation for composing work. Centres are reminded of the vital role to be played in advising candidates about appropriate and engaging stimuli.

#### Vocal composition

There was a significant increase in the number of candidates submitting vocal compositions. Many pieces were well rehearsed and recorded; the benefit of this process to candidates was reflected in the effectiveness of the text setting. Best practice was seen in candidates' work when the following points were considered:

- The style chosen did **not** duplicate the one submitted in Section A
- Candidates engaged fully with the possibilities offered by the chosen text, understanding metrical and syllabic emphasis
- Candidates demonstrated an understanding of writing for the voice by using vocal phrase marks and melismatic slurs to support the shaping of their materials

### **Programme music**

This task is very different to writing for film. Credit is awarded under Technique for a successful, closely defined interpretation of a narrative derived from a story, poem or picture. Some candidates mistakenly drew upon film clips for their programmatic starting point with materials that were conceived 'cinematically' with one new idea following after another allowing little room for development and linking of musical thoughts. One commentary referred to an intention to write a "film" score, whilst the brief made it clear that the composition was entered as "programme music". Candidates should be clear in their intentions and demonstrate an understanding of the more structurally organic nature of programmatic music.

### **Film / TV composition**

Some candidates clearly relished the opportunity to use their musical skills to gain credit for responding to the demands of working within the time constraints of a carefully chosen film extract. Some very well constructed 'storyboards' with clear timings also enabled appropriate materials to be assembled. Many candidates successfully navigated the technical demands of synchronising visual and sound media. Film clips and audio should not be provided separately. Centres are urged to provide support and guidance to candidates in the selection of suitable stimulus material. Moderators expressed some concern about the range of inappropriate material selected.

### **Production commentary**

Some candidates submitted two separate documents when they had chosen to provide a commentary to explain the production of their recording rather than a score. In this way, clear and detailed technical notes/pictures gave a commensurate level of attention to this information. A separate commentary for the compositional process, including the related listening, ensures that candidates focus at an appropriate level on each area. Candidates that merged the two commentaries into one document often failed to provide sufficient detail.

### **Concluding comments**

It was evident that a significant number of candidates wanted to realise their compositions in live performance and not infrequently it was clear from recordings that compositions had received public performances. Candidates learn enormously from the experience including players offering suggestions and the marking up of parts during rehearsals to suggest changes.

That candidates as composers are thinking about instruments, musicians and sound sources at the start of the compositional process, is all for the good.

## G356 Historical and Analytical Studies in Music

### 1. General Comments:

Almost all candidates demonstrated some musical understanding in Section A and were able to show some knowledge in their answers to Section B. There were some outstanding scripts. Some gave detailed and focused responses, while others needed to give much more concise, specific key information in their answers. Selection of appropriate material and application of correct terminology are essential to success at this level.

While most candidates completed the Paper, others did not manage their time efficiently, spending too long on Section A and thus leaving themselves insufficient time for the essays in Section B. Some handwriting was neat and easy to read. Others found writing legibly under examination conditions a real challenge. Candidates need to give consideration to this aspect of the examination during the course.

**Section A** required candidates to discuss various aspects of Weill's setting and all candidates demonstrated some ability to engage with the music. There were some good responses to questions concerning melody, accompaniment, motifs and word painting. The application of appropriate vocabulary proved challenging for some. While some candidates were able to discuss harmony and tonality in some depth, with many recognising G as the tonal centre, others were seemingly deflected by the lack of a key signature and incorrectly described the music as 'atonal'. Tonality is one of the two Areas of Study for all units in Music at A2 level and candidates need to acquire secure knowledge and skills in this area. They also need to develop their aural skills, so that, through attentive listening, they are better able to relate sound to symbol. Candidates need to demonstrate secure aural perception in order to gain high marks.

There were some lengthy unfocused responses in Section A. For most questions in this section, marks are awarded for each relevant comment and it is appropriate for candidates to write in note form rather than in extended prose. Indeed, writing in a succinct, precise manner should assist in focusing the candidate's mind on the requirements of the specific question. The ability to select only information that is relevant is an essential skill at this level. Also, writing concisely, within the space allocated on the question paper, should facilitate more effective time management. On the rare occasion where it is necessary to continue on extra sheets, candidates should indicate clearly that this occurs.

**Section B** responses included all Topics.

Most candidates were able to demonstrate some knowledge of the works they had studied, while the very best showed real engagement with the music. There was a tendency for some candidates to write too generally and narratively without actually pinpointing relevant details of the music itself. Many candidates produced unfocused essays that represented no more than descriptions of basic aspects of the music with little or no information beyond that provided in popular study guides. In order to gain high marks, candidates need to know the music in sufficient depth to be able to draw effectively upon musical detail to support perceptive observations relevant to the specific aspect of the chosen question.

For each Topic there are three distinct items of prescribed repertoire, each with its own set of related repertoire from the same period. In questions requiring discussion of more than one work, some candidates found the choice of appropriate repertoire challenging and wrote about works which were 'out of period' for the question. It is vital that candidates are able to place each work correctly within its historical context and to link it appropriately with other items of prescribed/related repertoire.

## 2. Comments on Individual Questions:

### Section A

- Q.1(a) There were some detailed, accurate answers with candidates recognising the limited range, stepwise movement and syllabic writing. Some described the mood of the text without reference to the vocal writing and there was some misuse of the term 'melisma'. Some wrote about the singer's interpretation rather than about the actual melody. Candidates needed to discuss the music by giving specific examples.
- Q.1(b) The best answers focused on the rôle of the piano, recognising the key centre, use of motifs and the structure. There were many general comments on chromaticism, but reference needed to be made to specific, relevant moments in the music to gain credit. Sometimes chords, for example D major in bar 3, were misinterpreted as keys. Correct references to harmony/tonality were needed to gain full marks. Some were unable to engage successfully with the tonality, with a number describing the music of the first bar as 'atonal'.
- Q.2 Most candidates gave some appropriate response, though some examples were rather general or unconvincing in terms of word painting and others referred to aspects of performance interpretation rather than features of the music. Reference to the music of voice and piano was needed to gain full marks. Some candidates gave more than the three examples required by the question – these extra responses could not be considered.
- Q.3 There were some detailed answers. Many candidates were able to produce convincing links between specific features of the text and musical details of the vocal melody and accompaniment. Fewer engaged with the use of motifs and harmony/tonality. To gain high marks candidates needed to demonstrate acute aural perception with detailed discussion of all the aspects required by the question.
- Q.4 This question was well answered with most candidates giving some appropriate response.
- Q.5 Most candidates gave some appropriate response, and there were some perceptive comments, though some discussed printed performance markings rather than the performers' interpretation. Some candidates did not *identify* examples, but merely made general comments about aspects such as 'vibrato' and 'rubato' without reference to specific moments in the music. As with Q.2, some candidates gave more than the four examples required by the question – these extra responses could not be considered.
- Q.6 In order to gain marks candidates needed to focus on the stylistic features of a song and compare it with the extract. Answers which discussed other types of work, such as whole song cycles or operas, were not credited. Specific details are needed if full marks are to be achieved. Some candidates did not accurately identify their chosen song.

### Section B

#### Topic 1

- Q.7 Most candidates were able to make some relevant points, though the integration aspect of the question was not always fully explored. The best answers demonstrated thorough familiarity with score detail and also the aural effectiveness of the music. Detailed references were necessary to gain high marks.
- Q.8 Most candidates were able to discuss the expressive features of the songs of Dowland. Discussions of the music of the other chosen composer were often rather limited.

- Q.9 Schumann and Schubert were the two most popular choices for discussion. The best answers showed detailed knowledge of individual songs and their context. There was some confusion about 'nineteenth century', with some candidates selecting repertoire from outside the period required by the question. Such answers could not be credited.

#### Topic 2

- Q.10 There were some good responses here with the more informed candidates able to discuss Berlioz's use of the *Dies Irae*, the waltz theme and the witches' round dance theme as well as the *idée fixe*. Some answers were restricted to general references without links to the effectiveness of the material.
- Q.11 Most candidates demonstrated some knowledge of particular moments in *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie*. Penderecki's *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* and Takemitsu's *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* were among the works cited for comparison. Better answers showed a close familiarity with the music and were able to link detailed examples of the expressive use of harmony and tonality to the programmatic elements of the music. This knowledge was often much less evident in the chosen related repertoire.
- Q.12 Vivaldi featured in most answers to this question, often with Couperin or Biber. While there were some good responses, many answers were inaccurate in detail. In order to achieve high marks, candidates needed to demonstrate secure understanding of the music of both chosen composers. Some candidates discussed works with limited programmatic content, which offered little opportunity for discussion.

#### Topic 3

- Q.13 Most candidates were able to mention some relevant features of melody, though examples of the expressive use of harmony and tonality were often less precise. Detailed responses on the music from at least three scenes were necessary to gain high marks. Candidates needed to focus on the specific question rather than writing about scenes in general terms.
- Q.14 There were some successful comparisons here. Most candidates were able to discuss some appropriate aspects of the music of both composers. Detailed illustrations of the use of underscore were necessary to gain high marks.
- Q.15 Most candidates were able to demonstrate some appropriate knowledge of the music of their chosen composers, but answers were often better on the use of timbre than texture. Most answers included the film music of Herrmann, often with Shire or Goldsmith. References to music that was not of the period demanded by the question could not be credited.

#### Topic 4

- Q.16 Most candidates were able to show relevant knowledge, though some answers were restricted to generalised comments. The best responses demonstrated close familiarity with a range of examples reflecting the differing rôles of the two choruses.
- Q.17 There were some successful comparisons here. Most candidates had some understanding of the features of the music of Stockhausen and their other chosen composer. Better answers provided convincing illustrations gleaned from close aural perception of the music of both composers.

- Q.18 This was answered well by most candidates. An awareness of the effects of changing religious trends on church music during the period was shown. Detailed illustrations from appropriate repertoire were required to gain high marks.

Topic 5

- Q.19 There were some detailed answers to this question. Some candidates, however, were only able to identify keys at the opening of movements and showed little engagement with the harmonic language used. A number of candidates cited brief moments from the whole work rather than focusing on the requirements of the specific question. Answers needed to refer in detail to at least two extended passages to access the full mark range.
- Q.20 Most candidates were able to demonstrate some appropriate knowledge of the music of the two works and there were some successful comparisons. Other candidates merely cited information found in a published study guide without showing that they actually knew the music sufficiently well to be able to focus on ways in which instrumental timbres and textures are used. In order to gain high marks candidates needed to know the works in enough depth to be able to draw upon relevant detail in response to the specific question.
- Q.21 Most responses focused on the music of Wagner and Verdi. Some candidates made generalised comments, rather than discussing the vocal writing. There was some confusion about 'nineteenth century' with some candidates selecting repertoire from outside the period required by the question. Such answers could not be credited.

Topic 6

- Q.22 Some candidates demonstrated good understanding of melody and tonality, but many responses were limited to the naming of keys and few were able to give convincing examples of the expressive use of harmony. In addition, a number of candidates did not focus their response on the aspects required by the specific question. It was necessary to discuss detailed relevant examples from at least four tracks to achieve a high mark.
- Q.23 The Kinks was a popular choice for comparison with The Beatles in this question. Good answers discussed instrumental accompaniment in some detail; others lacked sufficient focus, with candidates writing all they knew, or merely discussing the meaning of the lyrics. Some answers cited music which was not from the 1960s. Such references could not be credited.
- Q.24 Most candidates chose to discuss the music of Queen often with David Bowie or Led Zeppelin. Many responses lacked musical detail, merely listing production and recording techniques used. Candidates needed to demonstrate detailed knowledge of the music of both chosen groups to achieve high marks. As in Q.23, some answers discussed music which was not from the appropriate decade. Such references could not be credited.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
1 Hills Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2EU

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**Education and Learning**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England  
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU  
Registered Company Number: 3484466  
OCR is an exempt Charity

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
Head office  
Telephone: 01223 552552  
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2014

