

# MUSIC

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| <p>Paper 9703/11<br/>Listening</p> |
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## Key messages

- Candidates should ensure they use specific musical examples that are clearly recognisable.
- It is important to read the question carefully and for candidates to make sure the response is entirely relevant and focused.
- Candidates should not refer to track timings. Bar numbers should be memorised, as scores are not allowed.

## General comments

The general standard of responses was good. The strongest responses were of a very high standard, and there was some very mature thinking and extensive musical experience in evidence in the best work. Many candidates showed excellent knowledge of the Prescribed and Core works, and were able to refer to them in detail, and could construct intelligent and focused responses. Some candidates could have provided greater detail in the discussion questions in particular. These candidates' own musical experience also required expanding to better inform their responses.

Most answers started answering the question straight away but some others unnecessarily included much irrelevant information in lengthy introductions or conclusions, which did not add anything significant to the response. Introductions, especially where they contained material not directly relevant to the question, tended to detract from the quality of a response, not least because the time taken to write them could have been more productively spent providing more detail in examples. Responses were generally more successful when they were efficiently expressed, entirely relevant and non-repetitive. Some candidates appeared to value quantity over quality of response. The quality of a response and its suitability against the criteria is what dictates the mark.

Handwriting was generally legible and the standard of English was mostly good.

**Section A**, with its requirement for a more detailed familiarity with the set works, was sometimes less well-answered than **Section B** and **C** questions. There was sometimes a lack of consistency across the three sections.

Tempi vary wildly between interpretations of the set and core works. Candidates should refer to the structure of a piece of music when locating examples, and/or should describe the music clearly and chronologically. Centres are reminded that candidates are not allowed to refer to any scores during the examination, and therefore any quoted bar numbers should be from memory.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

This section requires close familiarity with the prescribed works. The strongest responses used vivid commentaries and well-chosen examples to answer the question relevantly. Some responses seemed to be written on a first or second hearing of the set work, and needed to provide more formal detail, as well as describing what was being heard with more clarity.

### **Question 1**

Many candidates described the outline of the instrumentation and described the main theme adequately, and gave a brief reference to the modified Sonata Form, but the structure generally needed to be described with greater clarity. Some candidates described the instrumentation in more detail, outlining the woodwind/strings dialogue and soloistic wind.

### **Question 2**

The basic differences between the genres was described by almost all candidates who chose this question, but only a few convincingly articulated the orchestral and solo partnership in the Haydn. Many correctly identified the more democratic nature of the symphony, but few elaborated further on this. Some candidates differentiated the Expositions. In general, more specific examples were needed to give a stronger response.

### **Question 3**

Some candidates struggled to answer this question outside the Theme and Variations form, but those who interpreted it as being about that form gave stronger responses.

### **Section B**

Although there was evidence of close familiarity with Core Works from most candidates, the strongest candidates showed familiarity with a wider range of repertoire where it was required by the question. Here, examples should still be clearly located, but it is also important to explain how effects have been achieved to demonstrate understanding. The most successful responses were firmly focused on the question and did not make reference to extraneous matters.

### **Question 4**

Descriptions of the programme were well managed and understood by many, and some responses linked the programme with precise details of orchestration, textures and harmony fairly well. However, there was some misidentification of orchestral instruments and descriptions were very vague.

### **Question 5**

Most candidates did not describe the Debussy well beyond the first section of the piece, and many responses needed to go beyond 'high and low' and 'soft dynamics'. Companion pieces (pop songs) were often not entirely appropriate, as many did not portray moonlight beyond the lyrics or title. Some candidates chose other 'art music' examples and these were more successful, and some were described convincingly.

### **Question 6**

Few candidates went further than the first and closing sections, describing the dialogue and the thunder at the end. Many pastoral elements such as the gentle 6/8 time and F major tonality were missed, as were some of the subtle orchestrations. Only a few candidates referred to these elements.

### **Section C**

The strongest candidates organised their thoughts logically and presented them in an orderly way, point by point, each illustrated by reference to relevant musical matters drawn from study of a wide range of repertoire and personal experience. Stronger responses drew upon a wide range of examples, showing excellent contextual knowledge. To be thorough or even comprehensive, candidates needed to consider the questions from multiple angles. For higher marks, arguments needed to be logical and convincing, with no confusion. Weaker responses were extensive, but were sometimes confused, with the question not being properly addressed or understood.

### **Question 7**

Innovation in the twentieth to twenty-first centuries was well described by many, particularly in technology and the development of digital instruments. Some candidates also compared these with new and evolving instruments from the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. In some cases, candidates could have given a more balanced response by considering compositional techniques and innovation in 'art music' in the modern day.

### Question 8

There were many good responses to this question with some candidates developing the discussion further into the different roles of a conductor, often drawing from individual experience of group music-making. There were a few responses that looked at different cultural and musical methods of ensemble leadership such as African Drumming, and the more democratic roles played within small ensembles, but these were less common.

### Question 9

There were only a few candidates who answered this question well. The most successful responses described the classical music models for later generations to draw influence from, whilst others focused more on the relevance of classical music through subjects such as love and nationalism. Many responses focused on modern pop styles being more relevant and appealing to wider audiences without always giving a balanced opinion of earlier music. Very few considered classical music from around the world, such as Indian classical music.

### Question 10

This question was interpreted in a number of valid ways, but there were also some irrelevant responses. Many candidates focused their responses around the function of music, and the use of music as an educational tool rather than its communication through various traditions and methods. Many candidates mentioned oral traditions with numerous examples, but few went further into other teaching and learning pathways.

# MUSIC

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| <p><b>Paper 9703/12</b><br/><b>Listening</b></p> |
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## Key messages

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- Candidates should not refer to track timings. Bar numbers should be memorised, as scores are not allowed.

## General comments

The general standard of responses was good. The strongest responses were of a very high standard, and there was some very mature thinking and extensive musical experience in evidence in the best work. Many candidates showed excellent knowledge of the Prescribed and Core works, and were able to refer to them in detail, and could construct intelligent and focused responses. Some candidates could have provided greater detail in the discussion questions in particular. These candidates' own musical experience also required expanding to better inform their responses.

Most answers started answering the question straight away but some others unnecessarily included much irrelevant information in lengthy introductions or conclusions, which did not add anything significant to the response. Introductions, especially where they contained material not directly relevant to the question, tended to detract from the quality of a response, not least because the time taken to write them could have been more productively spent providing more detail in examples. Responses were generally more successful when they were efficiently expressed, entirely relevant and non-repetitive. Some candidates appeared to value quantity over quality of response. The quality of a response and its suitability against the criteria is what dictates the mark.

Handwriting was generally legible and the standard of English was mostly good.

**Section A**, with its requirement for a more detailed familiarity with the set works, was sometimes less well-answered than **Section B** and **C** questions. There was sometimes a lack of consistency across the three sections.

Tempi vary wildly between interpretations of the set and core works. Candidates should refer to the structure of a piece of music when locating examples, and/or should describe the music clearly and chronologically. Centres are reminded that candidates are not allowed to refer to any scores during the examination, and therefore any quoted bar numbers should be from memory.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

This section requires close familiarity with the prescribed works. The strongest responses used vivid commentaries and well-chosen examples to answer the question relevantly. Some responses seemed to be written on a first or second hearing of the set work, and needed to provide more formal detail, as well as describing what was being heard with more clarity.

### **Question 1**

Some candidates gave a very detailed account of the first movement and clearly knew the piece well. Others were very detailed and gave almost exhaustive commentaries for the opening Introduction and part of the

*Allegro*, but wrote less confidently about the later parts of the movement, neglecting some of the significant writing in the Development. Many candidates focused on the orchestral roles without clear reference to the formal sections, which produced some very confused answers.

## Question 2

This was generally well-answered with some detailed accounts of the instrumental roles and the structure of the theme. However, few candidates stated that most of the variations followed the same harmonic and structural scheme as the theme. There were some very good observations about the minor key variations.

## Question 3

There were basic inferences to the soloistic nature of the Haydn and the more equal scoring of the Beethoven, but little detail was shown beyond these observations. A few candidates mentioned the different formal constructions of the movements, but again more detail was needed in many responses.

## Section B

Although there was evidence of close familiarity with Core Works from most candidates, the strongest candidates showed familiarity with a wider range of repertoire where it was required by the question. Here, examples should still be clearly located, but it is also important to explain how effects have been achieved, to demonstrate understanding. The most successful responses were firmly focused on the question and did not make reference to extraneous matters.

## Question 4

Almost all candidates selected three contrasting scenes and understood the programme well. Occasionally, descriptions were difficult to locate and needed a clearer link between event and musical feature.

## Question 5

'Stillness' was not generally well-described in responses, with most candidates choosing to refer to Debussy's *Clair de lune* and another instrumental work. Descriptions rarely moved beyond basic pitch, tempo and dynamics and needed to contain more specific musical detail.

## Question 6

There were some successful responses, but the programme and musical observations were not always accurately or clearly aligned. There were some misidentified terms used to describe *Un bal*, and some vagueness in descriptions of the unfolding instability of the protagonist's mind in *Scène aux champs*. Descriptions of tension were generally stronger in relation to *Marche au supplice*.

## Section C

The strongest candidates organised their thoughts logically and presented them in an orderly way, point by point, each illustrated by reference to relevant musical matters, drawn from study of a wide range of repertoire and personal experience. Stronger responses drew upon a wide range of examples, showing excellent contextual knowledge. To be thorough or even comprehensive, candidates needed to consider the questions from multiple angles. For higher marks, arguments needed to be logical and convincing, with no confusion. Weaker responses were extensive, but were sometimes confused, with the question not being properly addressed or understood.

## Question 7

Some responses commented on the number of different platforms for which music is composed today and many compared these with the more patronage-based contexts of the earlier periods in music. A large number of candidates concentrated on the advent of Music Technology, but did not balance this with detailed reasoning for earlier composition. In most cases, money was also mentioned on as a reason for composition.

## Question 8

No candidates answered this question.

**Question 9**

Candidates answered this question quite well by describing examples of cover songs, remixes and arrangements. A few candidates discussed the benefits of using old music in modern contexts.

**Question 10**

There was a range of different answers ranging from very basic comparisons to more sophisticated arguments comparing piano transcriptions of orchestral pieces and vice versa. Some candidates talked more about the extensive range of styles the piano could adopt without referring to those playable by an orchestra. A few candidates explored the timbral properties of the piano in comparison with the orchestra, which provided some interesting and insightful views.

# MUSIC

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| <p><b>Paper 9703/13</b><br/><b>Listening</b></p> |
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## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

This section requires close familiarity with the prescribed works. The strongest responses used vivid commentaries and well-chosen examples to answer the question relevantly. Some responses seemed to be written on a first or second hearing of the set work, and needed to provide more formal detail, as well as describing what was being heard with more clarity.

### **Question 1**

Most candidates observed the basic differences in the employment of instruments, key changes, and the canonic treatment in variations II and IX. Finer detail was missing from many answers relating to the

treatment of the theme and the consequent/antecedent nature of the melody, but there were some responses that showed close familiarity with the music.

### Question 2

Only stronger candidates answered this question well. Many responses needed much more detail about how the orchestra and the trumpet are in constant dialogue with some role reversal. Some candidates pointed out the double exposition and the trumpet 'taking the lead' when it entered for the first time.

### Question 3

Most candidates were able to identify some soloistic uses of instruments in the Beethoven, but there was generally less success in describing instances in the Mozart.

### Section B

Although there was evidence of close familiarity with Core Works from most candidates, the strongest candidates showed familiarity with a wider range of repertoire where it was required by the question. Here, examples should still be clearly located, but it is also important to explain how effects have been achieved to demonstrate understanding. The most successful responses were firmly focused on the question and did not make reference to extraneous matters.

### Question 4

There were some very successful responses to this question which managed to refer to specific examples of dynamic variation and described clearly how this contributed to the scene. A small number of candidates referred to aspects outside the scope of the question, but where this included reference to the number of instruments (and therefore, louder dynamics), this was sometimes relevant.

### Question 5

There was a roughly equal split of *Clair de Lune* and *Nymphs* in *Vltava* in choice of Core works, but most stronger responses elaborated on the orchestration of Smetana's piece. Only a few candidates gave a strong account of *Clair de Lune* beyond the opening section. Some wider listening was mentioned, but this was not always appropriate as many were pop songs in which lyrics were not always adequately represented by the music. However, there were some good choices of 'art music' described convincingly.

### Question 6

Some descriptions for this question mentioned the protagonist's unstable mind and fluctuating moods, but did not always convincingly link this to the use of harmony, tonality and other elements. Many candidates correctly identified the significance of the *idée fixe* in the second and fourth movements, but this was less well identified in the third.

### Section C

The strongest candidates organised their thoughts logically and presented them in an orderly way, point by point, each illustrated by reference to relevant musical matters, drawn from study of a wide range of repertoire and personal experience. Stronger responses drew upon a wide range of examples, showing excellent contextual knowledge. To be thorough or even comprehensive, candidates needed to consider the questions from multiple angles. For higher marks, arguments needed to be logical and convincing, with no confusion. Weaker responses were extensive, but were sometimes confused, with the question not being properly addressed or understood.

### Question 7

Only stronger candidates displayed the historical or contextual perspective to be able to make sound judgements on how music was popularised in the First Viennese School. Most candidates just mentioned that it was only accessible to the privileged classes. However, there were a number of excellent responses focusing on modern pop music, even if this sometimes led to slightly unbalanced responses.

### Question 8

Some candidates discussed motivic development in Beethoven's *Symphony no. 5*, and basic chord structures in modern songs to a reasonable extent, but many musical traditions and styles were neglected in responses. There were a few references to World Music and Minimalism, but overall, many candidates needed to support their views with a greater weight of evidence.

### Question 9

A range of approaches was seen in responses to this question, from recording and performance, through to digital editing and enhancement. Few candidates entered into a detailed debate with supporting evidence, for example by comparing interpretations of the same piece through different media, which might have answered the question more directly.

### Question 10

There were some responses relating to the development of the trumpet, citing Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto*, but this is not a woodwind instrument. Responses that did deal with a woodwind instrument could have displayed greater knowledge about the history and evolution of the chosen instrument, how it has been developed over time, and how it has been used in the Prescribed, Core and other works.

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| <p><b>Paper 9703/02</b><br/><b>Practical Musicianship</b></p> |
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## Key messages

- The skills (disciplines) offered in Element 2 should be clearly different from the performance presented in Element 1.
- There should be 3 recordings provided for each of the disciplines in Element 2, recorded over a period of no less than 6 months.
- Copies of the music should be included for Element 1 and for the final recording of Element 2.
- Element 3 folios should be accompanied by a brief scheme of work. The given part and the work of the candidate should be clearly differentiated.
- If a score is not provided for Element 4, there should be a detailed commentary that guides the listener through the work.
- DVD's and CD's should be checked for playability prior to dispatch.

## General comments

In the final year of this specification, the overall standard achieved by candidates in this component was often outstanding with some exciting and varied submissions across all four Elements. Many centres presented varied combinations of Elements, allowing individual candidates to work to their strengths and demonstrate a high level of musical engagement.

**Element 1** was presented by almost all candidates. Piano or voice were the most popular instruments, but Moderators heard the full range of orchestral, jazz and popular instruments, with one or two examples of World Music too. Most candidates were poised and confident and many candidates performed to an audience, ranging from peers in the classroom to a full school concert, and even a jazz club. Most candidates chose a range of repertoire suited to their capabilities, and many were expertly accompanied. Some performed just one piece, or two very similar pieces. Demonstration of a range of techniques and understanding of a range of styles are among the aspects considered in the assessment criteria, and, if the selection of repertoire is too narrow, it may not be possible for candidates to access the full range of marks. Most candidates gave a spoken introduction and these were often fascinating and informative, with context, musical content and technical challenges highlighted and discussed. Candidates who simply stated their name and the pieces performed were not able to access the full range of marks in Assessment Criterion E. Centres are reminded that each candidate's submission for Element 1 should be recorded as one continuous performance presented on a single occasion.

Most DVD recordings were of good quality, with the camera/microphone suitably placed, but there were some instances where poor audio balance was detrimental to the overall performance. The recorded balance between the candidate and the accompaniment or backing track should be checked, and corrected if necessary, prior to the performance. Centres occasionally had to be contacted because recordings were missing, or would not play. It is helpful if the disks can be checked prior to dispatch, preferably on more than one machine.

**In Element 2**, the majority of candidates presented two disciplines as required and many achieved a high standard. This Element gives candidates an opportunity to develop and extend their skills over a period of time, and there was much evidence of enthusiastic music-making. It is fine to show progress, and several candidates started a 'second instrument' from scratch. However, assessors must consult the assessment criteria carefully – a candidate who, by the final assessment, is still playing at the level of a complete beginner, should not be awarded full marks. Centres should ensure that the tasks undertaken for the two disciplines are truly different from each other, and from that offered in Element 1. Some centres found it difficult to differentiate between skills, and tasks were occasionally very similar. For example, a drummer in a rock band performing two pieces with the same ensemble – one designated 'Accompanying' and the other

'Ensemble Playing', but the skills are essentially the same. Marks would therefore be adjusted. However, it was encouraging to see several examples of improvising this year, with candidates performing with jazz groups, a percussion ensemble and even a ukulele orchestra. It is helpful if a lead sheet is provided so that the candidate's input and creativity can be clearly determined. There were relatively few examples of Conducting and Rehearsing this year, but there were one or two very accomplished accompanists, some accompanying Element 1 recitals.

Some DVD's contained only one final performance for each discipline. Three performances are required so that candidates can demonstrate a learning process over a period of time. Centres should ensure that submissions demonstrate the full range of criteria for this Element as indicated in the Syllabus – not always possible with just one recording. Because this Element is intended to reflect the music-making that takes place across the school year, it is fine for early assessments to include recordings of large-scale groups such as choirs or orchestras, as long as the candidate is clearly discernible on the DVD. However, in order to access the full mark range, the final performance should include the candidate with a discrete part in a smaller ensemble. Teacher comments are particularly helpful in this Element and are noted very carefully by Moderators. Centres are reminded that copies of the music performed for the final assessment of each discipline should be included with the submission.

For **Element 3** most candidates who submitted work had followed suitable courses covering a range of appropriate knowledge and techniques in one established tradition. Candidates are not expected to present full texture without any given material and at least one part (usually the top or bottom) should be given throughout each exercise. Candidates may undertake some preliminary work in preparation for more specific exercises, but the final exercises selected for assessment should contain evidence of the range of language and techniques acquired within the selected tradition. The material chosen for submission should be based on actual (identified) repertoire, with the given material clearly distinguishable from the candidate's work. Centres should ensure that exercises submitted are of sufficient length to enable candidates to demonstrate use of the techniques they have learnt during their course. Centres are reminded that it is a requirement that a clear outline of the course undertaken for Element 3 should be submitted with the folios, and it is also helpful if the work has been annotated by the teacher, particularly if the candidate has produced more than one draft of a piece of work.

In **Element 4**, there was much evidence of imagination, creativity and a willingness to experiment, to innovate and to refine. Initial research and critical listening to the music of other composers is essential before starting the compositional process. Many candidates provided detailed notes and commentaries to support their compositional choices – these really do help to inform the finished product. Candidates should be encouraged to concentrate on musical detail rather than background contextual information or in-depth discussion of lyrics. Most candidates worked very confidently with notation, but if a written score was not provided, the strongest accompanying written commentaries comprehensively guided the listener through the composition sometimes with screen shots of software or graphic scores. Some candidates might have benefited from keeping their instrumental resources relatively small: when working with music technology, it is easy to add more and more instruments to the score – but this does not necessarily make a better piece. Some of the most successful submissions were confined to duets or trios – the status of each part had been carefully considered; there was clarity of structure and sufficient variety of texture and timbre without the composer (or the listener) being overwhelmed by a full orchestra or wind band. Centres are reminded that submissions should be for two or more instruments.

Some folios were rather generously marked, particularly in Assessment Criteria E. The use of music technology does not guarantee high marks: candidates should be encouraged to leave enough time at the end of the course to review both the score and the initial recording. Some submissions in the top bands were missing articulation, dynamics and phrase marks on the score, and recordings would have benefited from careful mixing to adequately reflect the composer's intention.

Administration of the Component was generally good, although one or two marks had to be amended because of incorrect addition or transcription onto the MS1.

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| <p><b>Paper 9703/03</b><br/><b>Performing</b></p> |
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## **Key messages**

- Candidates should select focused repertoire that is within their technical capability
- In the spoken introduction to their performance, candidates should demonstrate how each item of their repertoire reflects the chosen focus

## **General comments**

There was a good level of work submitted for this component with almost all candidates achieving at least a satisfactory level. Outstanding recitals were heard on piano, voice, violin, viola, 'cello, double bass, oboe, bass guitar and drum kit. About half the candidature performed on piano or voice, but the full range of orchestral and jazz/pop instruments were also presented as well as instruments from the Chinese, Mongolian and Caribbean traditions.

The repertoire chosen for performance was usually well suited to candidates' technical ability and enabled them to demonstrate the full range of musical skills required by the assessment criteria. Some candidates did not perform as well as they could have done if they had selected slightly less demanding repertoire. This would have given them an opportunity to show greater understanding and a real sense of performance.

The music performed in this component should have a clear focus. While most candidates chose an appropriate focus, others selected a range of unconnected repertoire without due attention to how individual pieces might be linked by a single focus. Consideration of this aspect should form an important part of the initial preparation for the component. Various appropriate approaches were taken this session. Some candidates explored the music of a single composer: examples included Bach keyboard preludes, Chopin's waltzes for piano, songs from Sondheim musicals and the use of the drum kit in the music of Led Zeppelin. Others considered a genre of music: examples included early classical flute sonatas, Czech nationalist music for violin, late nineteenth century trombone music and rock music of the 1980s for electric guitar.

Spoken introductions ranged from thorough surveys of how the music to be performed reflected the chosen focus, to mere listing of repertoire composers and titles. The quality and relevance of the spoken introduction was assessed in Criterion E: Stylistic Understanding.

Most centres provided competent accompanists and suitable venues for the performance, but a number of candidates encountered a large amount of noise from both within and outside the performance room. Many candidates performed in front of an audience, but even if a candidate chooses not to have an audience, the performance should be presented with a sense of occasion and the performance space should be organised in such a way as to give candidates the greatest possible opportunity to perform to best advantage.

DVD recordings were generally of good quality with microphones and cameras suitably positioned. Care should be taken to ensure that a good sound balance is achieved between the candidate and any live accompaniment or backing track.

This was the final June Series for this component. The equivalent component in the revised Syllabus 9483 is Component 3 Extended Performance. Centres are advised to note carefully the requirements of this new component, particularly those regarding focus, performance length and the written research report which replaces the current spoken introduction.

# MUSIC

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| <p><b>Paper 9703/04</b><br/><b>Composing</b></p> |
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## **Key messages**

- Centres should ensure that packages contain clear identifying details and the correct materials to be sent to the examiner for that unit.
- Where a commentary replaces a score, (only where the music cannot be conventionally notated) details of the performing of parts must be included.

## **General comments**

There was a wide range of composing submissions with evidence of much commitment and enthusiasm. The brief commentary document that all candidates should provide is important in conveying key compositional decisions and explaining the listening influences that were important for the candidate in their composing work. However, candidates should not include multiple pages of commentary as this is not required and takes time away from the main task. Candidates should give concise and accessible information. The commentary itself should provide all the information required and should not refer to websites. Composers' names as well as compositional titles should be given when referencing relevant listening.

Longer commentaries, as replacements for the score when the music cannot be notated by conventional means, have different characteristics. Improvisation that is not played by the composer, for example, cannot be credited to the composer unless extensive explanation is given as to how the composer conveyed their ideas and requirements to the instrumentalists. In electro-acoustic compositions, full details of software, hardware and recording and mixing processes where appropriate, should be given.

In general the commentary should not simply describe what is self-evident in the score or audio, but should explain the significance of the judgements or choices and use of instruments that will add to the understanding of the composing process.

Whilst it is intended that candidates should have the widest freedom to choose the style and genre of their composing work, candidates must take time to consider whether their work meets the assessment criteria for this component. A single song of four and a half minutes duration, with much internal repetition, without any instrumental bridge or modulation is unlikely to be able to fully access the full range of marks available.

Music for video games was a common inspiration for candidates but they needed to consider the extent to which music without the visual context will stand up to scrutiny. Often, candidates imitated the genre to the extent that they presented an idea that was effective in a single mood that is highly atmospheric, but little more in musical terms.

## **Materials**

Candidates presented a very varied range of materials. For some, the medium prompted creativity: working in an electro-acoustic medium, for example, or writing for violin and piano. Extra-musical stimuli such as texts, poems and mythology were also seen. If a painting or photograph had inspired musical creativity, a copy of this should be included with the commentary.

Borrowed materials must always be credited and care should be taken with the notion of re-mix and sampling. Whilst there is skill in the selecting and combining of pre-existing materials, candidates cannot be credited for the work of others. Candidates must always avoid the duplication of offensive or unnecessarily graphic lyrics in any context.

Some candidates successfully generated their own storyboard for a film score.

### **Use of Materials**

Successful candidates framed their ideas in a way that enabled them to display skills of organisation, development and coherence of musical language. Candidates were not always sufficiently knowledgeable about western tonal harmony or serialism, for example, to be able to use these musical means of organising pitch in a convincing way. Preparation exercises or shorter composing tasks can be helpful to give practice in the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and understanding.

### **Structure**

Candidates should aim to build their compositions in a clear way whether it be through-composed, gradually transforming and unfolding, or in a more conventional format. Most structures will contain elements of repetition and contrast but candidates will notice how composers rarely repeat material precisely but will subtly vary the different versions of material.

Some compositions were rather long in relation to the quality of ideas or materials. Candidates possibly believed the compositional length should be as near to eight minutes as possible. The syllabus explains a rather more flexible approach.

### **Use of Medium and Texture**

Candidates' choice of instrumentation included those from a range of cultures and traditions. Care must be taken in the notation of ideas for the instruments. This is also true for the use of synthesised sounds, which should be clearly labelled. Instrumental sounds on recordings cannot always be accurately represented but the composing intention must always be made clear.

If Guzheng is required, for example, but a zither is indicated on the score this must be explained. If candidates choose to compose for instruments that they do not fully understand, they should spend time getting to know the idiomatic qualities of instruments they may want to write for including their characteristics and practical capabilities.

Candidates who wrote for large forces did not always use all the instruments listed. The overuse of unison texture was often seen and candidates would benefit from studying successful examples of good orchestral textures and observing the different ways instruments can be combined. Candidates can often compose very successfully using smaller groups of instruments.

Many recordings were computer-generated audio and sometimes lacked colour. Candidates can provide life and expression by giving greater attention to editing possibilities.

### **Notation and Presentation**

Some simple practicalities could help candidates maximise their achievement in this area. If non-English texts are used for song lyrics, for example, they should include a translation. Scores should contain a clear range of appropriate expression and performance markings. Conventional score layout, in terms of the order of instruments, should be observed. CD recordings should be checked before despatch as some submissions stopped before the end of the music.

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| <p><b>Paper 9703/05</b><br/><b>Investigation and Report</b></p> |
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## **Key messages**

- A CD consisting of carefully selected portions of audio tracks is a compulsory part of the submission.
- Candidates should learn how to access a wide range of research sources and understand how to use references and quotation marks to avoid plagiarism.
- Candidates should reflect on the link between the report and either performing or composing and should make sure this is clearly explained on the cover sheet and in a well-defined concluding statement.
- Teachers should not complete the cover sheet articulating the link on behalf of the candidate.
- Candidates must avoid any overlap with set works studied for the Music Listening Paper.

## **General comments**

A wide range of approaches and topics were seen in this unit. The majority of candidates chose to link their report to the Performing unit but there were a number of candidates who linked their work to the Composing task.

The report itself should be a process of distillation and should be a sharply focussed summary of the investigations that have taken place. Depending on the topic chosen, candidates may have several documents to include in their submission. The report and CD are essential but annotated scores may also be useful and candidates often submitted these as appendix material. There were some submissions this year that had not been carefully compiled. Supporting documentation such as the bibliography and discography were often inadequately presented with essential details missing. Titles of pieces alone were given with no composer named; performers/conductors/orchestras/producers/were rarely documented. Some web links were inaccurate and sources could not be verified.

Some CDs were blank and had not been checked before despatch.

## **Aural familiarity**

Many candidates presented CDs of whole tracks, which did not enable them to access the full range of marks for aural familiarity. It is in the selection of extracts and the precise editing of these that demonstrates what the candidate has heard.

Candidates should link the tracks to the text as clearly as possible. A precise track list is essential. On a number of occasions it was not possible to connect the tracks to the report because of lack of care in referencing.

## **Contextual understanding**

Candidates were most successful when they provided contextual information in proportion to the subject matter, taking care not to focus on this information at the expense of more directly musical matters.

Biographical sketches can be useful but many candidates, relying too heavily on Wikipedia, Grove online or other such general information websites, ran the risk of penalties for plagiarism as they simply cut and pasted too much material. Some candidates referred to GCSE textbooks with some suggestion that they were revisiting music previously studied. This is inappropriate. The idea of this unit is to encourage candidates to extend themselves beyond their current knowledge base.

Teachers can support candidates in developing their understanding of what scholarly articles and texts may mean in their subject area. Candidates should not use materials posted online by other students, even at university level, but should look for those writers whose reputations for expertise in a certain area is well established.

### **Analytic/technical vocabulary**

Whether in the realm of a performing or a composing link, the use of appropriate vocabulary in describing musical matters provides insight as to the depth of candidates' understanding when they analyse music or compare performances. Successful candidates were able to access primary texts and quoted from these sources, and also over time formulated their own deliberations about the music they were studying. The authentic voice of the candidate in response to the research process is an important aspect of learner development at this stage.

### **Demonstration of link**

Successful candidates showed the link between their work in this unit and either their composition or performing as a thread that was sustained throughout the report. This assessment category makes it clear that the report has to be significant in terms of those other areas of study and if this is not made clear, candidates will not be able to access higher marks.

### **Communication of findings and acknowledgements**

Many candidates did not adequately check their work to ensure that all necessary acknowledgements had been made. Candidates must remember to credit pictures/illustrations taken from books, etc. They must fully reference any screenshots of scores that are part of the report text. If transcriptions of scat singing are provided, for example, it must be made clear if they are the candidates' own work or that of another source.