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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCE Music 6MU03

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Introduction

This unit tests several diverse skills of aural perception, essay writing and analysis of prescribed works, harmonic analysis and harmonisation of a short SATB passage. It is important that the teaching of this unit encompasses all these facets of music if the candidate is to secure a good mark on the paper as a whole. It is also possible to relate listening skills with harmony work in an integrated approach to teaching.

Comments on Individual Questions

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and/or comments, for a selection of questions. The exemplification will come mainly from questions which required more complex responses from candidates.

Question 1(b)

The question is often asked to compare bars of music and these should be familiar at GCSE level as the 'sequence' question!

(b) What technical term explains how bars 11 and 12 relate to bar 10?	(1)
repetition	



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Examiner Comments

The sequence is such a common device that it should be known. Whilst the answer 'repetition' here has an element of the answer, the fact that it occurs at a different pitch is decisive and therefore only 'sequence' will suffice



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Examiner Tip

Students will identify numerous examples of these in their set works. They should not only see them on the page, but get used to hearing them as preparation for the listening tests.

Question 1(c)

This question is common and asks the candidate to describe how a figure is used in the music. The teaching should highlight common musical procedures such as repetition, sequence, scalar movement etc. as these are the common devices often tested.

(c) Mozart bases the right-hand part of bars 14–16 on the descending two-quaver figure heard twice in bar 13. Give **two** ways in which he does this.

- 1 The 1st ^{first note (1st)} B^b remains the same on the beat (1 and 3)⁽²⁾
- 2 The second ^(quaver) note moves in step increasing in pitch $\frac{1}{2}$ each time it is heard.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has been able to hear the repeated notes and the scalar movement. 'Increasing in pitch' was taken to mean ascending/ rises.



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Examiner Tip

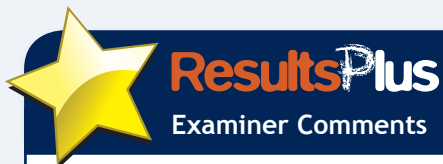
Although this scores full marks, it is rather untidy and long winded. Again single words often score the marks, eg. 'repeated notes' 'conjunct' 'inversion' etc.

Question 1(d)

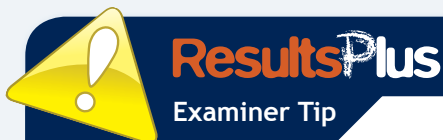
As in 1(c) more detail and aural analysis is sought about a musical figure. The question is looking for knowledge of common musical devices

(d) Comment on the rhythm and melodic writing of the right-hand part in bar 20. step
(2)

The melody is scalic and conjunct, the rhythm has semi quaver note values



This question for two marks requires two points about rhythm/ melody. Again, the answers are one or two words such as 'scalic' 'conjunct'. This candidate has tackled one point on melody and one on rhythm. It could be possible to make two valid points on just one of these elements.



Try to identify only two features. Long answers with too many points often do not secure full marks.

Question 1(e)

This is a simple aural pitch recognition question. Interval displacement of the octave should be straight-forward. Students should practice these skills in lessons.

Question 1(f) (i)

The chord recognition here and at fii and fiii is a stock progression that will have been taught in preparation for the harmony question.

Note that the full and precise chord description must be given. In this case Ic. I on its own received no marks.

Question 1(f) (ii)

As in fi, V7 (or F7) only for the mark. V (or F) alone = no credit.

Question 1(f) (iii)

This was a little more straight-forward as just chord I.

As in all these three chords, students should practice common progressions such as II7b-V7-I etc.

Question 1(g) (i)

Simple cadence recognition test. Students should understand and be able to write and hear the four common cadences.

Question 1(g) (ii)

This question tests whether the candidates can hear and recognise a suspension and appoggiatura ornament. Extra credit is given for hearing the left hand outlining the tonic triad as a broken chord.

(ii) Describe **two** ways in which the final chord of this cadence is decorated.

(2)

- 1 Appoggiatura
- 2 Suspension



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Examiner Comments

We see here again that two devices are tested in this question. The suspension and appoggiatura is a typical classical trait in Mozart's cadence treatment and should have been learnt.



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Examiner Tip

The word 'decorated' should have been a clue to the ornament response and the decoration of the left hand broken arpeggio.

Question 1(i)

Features of a musical style are often asked. The mark scheme to this question includes generic features of the Classical Period and not just those appertaining to keyboard music.

(i) This excerpt was composed in the Classical period. Identify **two** features which are typical of music of this period. (2)

1 use of alberti bass

2 periodic phrasing

(Total for Question 1 = 16 marks)



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Examiner Comments

When studying each prescribed work, it is useful to discuss general features of the period or style. In this candidate response both happen to relate to the piece.



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Examiner Tip

Always identify the most obvious features of a style such as in this candidate response.

Question 2(b)

This question asks candidates to make two points about how tonality is established in The Kinks song.

(b) Give **two** ways in which the key of E major is established in the first four bars of the excerpt.

(2)

- 1 Dominant Preparation using a repeated B7 chord
- 2 Descending bass sequence from B to B on dominant 7th chord



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Examiner Comments

This is a good answer in that the candidate highlights one feature of the harmony and one relating to the bass line. Many candidates were over-concerned with writing about E major chords but clearly did not listen to the opening passage.



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Examiner Tip

When asked about establishing a key, think about cadences, chords (in this case the dominant), pedals, melody and bass lines. Again the set works give numerous examples of how keys are defined in music.

Question 2(c)

Instrument recognition was universally well known for this piece.

Classical instruments however are not as reliable!

Question 2(d)

This song is based almost entirely on the five note hook, so a question on its use is predictable. Again, the mark scheme is looking for recognition of a musical device.

(d) Describe how the opening five-note hook on 'Dirty old river' (starting bar 8, beat 3) is used and developed up to the end of bar 11.

(2)

Descending sequence of the same melodic shape.



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Examiner Comments

The identification of the sequence is sufficient for one mark, but direction adds more detail for two marks. The question also asked about how the figure was developed, suggesting change. Indeed, it is extended on the third repeat.



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Examiner Tip

'Used' often implies that it is repeated in some form. It could be inverted, played in longer/ shorter note values etc. Students do need command and knowledge of these terms and devices in these listening questions.

Question 2(e)

Candidates found this question to be very straight-forward and secured full marks. As has been mentioned in 2(c) more practice is needed with the sounds and timbres of classical instruments.

Question 2(f)

Three responses relating to contrast are asked about this bridge section. Marks are credited for hearing different harmony/chords, a modulation, new bass guitar and drum rhythms, a new/higher pitched melody, and also for hearing that the hook is not used and there is no electric guitar. Again, the musical elements of melody, pitch, rhythm, harmony, tonality are all tested.

(f) Give **three** ways in which musical contrast is achieved in the bridge section from bar 16 to 19.

(3)

- 1 secondary chords are used e.g F#minor, C#major
- 2 the hook is not being played
- 3 backing voices change - go up a scale



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Examiner Comments

The response in the clip highlights three credit points relating to the chords/lack of hook (melody) and the pitch of vocals.



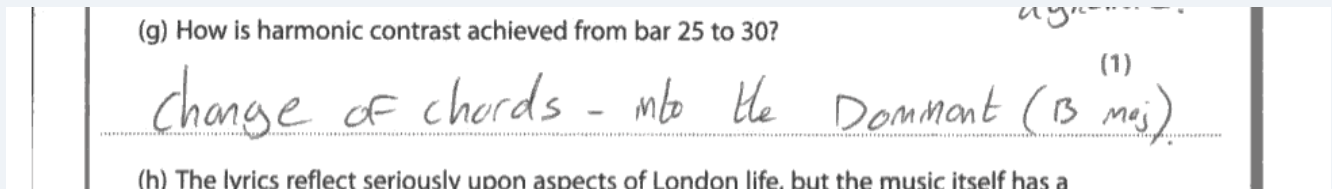
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Examiner Tip

As has been mentioned in the introduction, try to highlight one point per musical element as this might generate more marks than trying to find three responses for say the harmony alone.

Question 2(g)

This was a difficult question and only a few candidates heard the F sharp major chord/ secondary dominant. Most chose B major (dominant).



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Examiner Comments

This response was typical, hearing B major as opposed to F sharp major.



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Examiner Tip

The score contains clues and details which would have helped in the response to this question.

Question 2(h)

A context question such as this requires lateral thinking by the candidates. The answers always relate to the standard musical elements of pitch, rhythm, harmony, timbre, tempo, melody etc.

(h) The lyrics reflect seriously upon aspects of London life, but the music itself has a more positive feeling. Identify **two** ways in which the composer creates this feeling in the music.

(2)

- 1 Key of E major
- 2 upbeat rhythm



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Examiner Comments

Two pertinent points here: one relating to major tonality and the second to the nature of the rhythms in the song.



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Examiner Tip

Think about the main musical elements and consider the obvious relating, in this case, to a 'more positive feeling'.
Tonality and rhythm are the obvious two.

Question 2(i)

'Double tracking' was either understood or totally misunderstood. The question has two facets- what does 'Double tracking' mean and what is its effect on the overall sound. Candidates need to read questions thoroughly to ensure that they understand this.

- (i) Some of the lead vocal part has been *double tracked*. What does this mean and how does it affect the overall sound of the song?

They have been recorded twice, making the ⁽²⁾ vocals sound fuller and clearer.

(Total for Question 2 = 16 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has successfully highlighted both aspects of the question posed.

Question 3(a)

Both essays require facts and features of musical styles. To secure top marks as in these two essays, all points are backed up with apposite examples quoting bar numbers or passage reference points.

If you answer part (a) put a cross in the box .

If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box .

ai Simple diatonic melodies are used for example the opening trumpet theme in bars 1-4 which are typical of the style of Neoclassicism. Periodic phrasing is also a key feature for example bars 1-4 ends on a perfect cadence in the tonic and this is answered 4 bars later by a perfect cadence in the dominant. However, Poulenc spices up conventional chord progressions by making use of wrong notes - for example the horn plays a C in the perfect cadence in bar 4 - not a D which is

typical of this provocative, humorous nature of Neoclassicism.

The harmony is tonal; Poulenc uses clear cadence points for example at bars 4 and uses primary chords (in bars 1-4 Poulenc uses chords I, IV and V) - this is also typical of the Neoclassical time. Poulenc also uses syncopation (like in bars 13-14) but does a variety of techniques to create humour and amuse the listener - again an important characteristic of the Neoclassical style. Poulenc constantly changes metre and tempo - for example bar 9 is $\frac{3}{4}$ time, bar 16 is $\frac{4}{4}$ and bar 17 is $\frac{5}{4}$. He also varies the speed because section A is fast but at section B (bar 26) he slows the pace down to make it exciting for the listener - many Neoclassical pieces aimed to do this. Finally, to create further wit and sarcasm, he fragments the melody between the trio at bars 22-25. The horn plays quavers instead of semiquavers and the trombone ~~for~~ augments the rhythm. The opening triadic figure loses all energy, shape and accompaniment - this is certainly not what you would expect in a classical piece and it is a defining feature of Neoclassicism whereby Poulenc attempts to create humour and sarcasm to amuse the listeners.

ii. The structure of the Brandenburg Concerto is ritornello form - there is a returning ritornello - ("Little Return") in different keys broken up by episodes. The tonality is a very important aspect in this concerto and helps to define the structure. The tonality is very clear; Bach uses a clear chord progression

of IVI which can be heard in the first 3 bars. The baroque flutes are also used in Parallel 3^{nds} and 6^{ths} throughout - especially from bars 67-83. Bach also uses tonic Pedal notes to reinforce the key for example at bar 325 - the ripieno play a B to reinforce B minor. The structure of ritornello is highlighted by the Syncopated Cadential figure which marks the end of a ritornello. Bach uses clear Cadence Points - for example bars 82-83 he uses a perfect cadence to highlight important keys and sections. The end of ritornellos are also emphasized by the syncopation and terraced dynamics - Bar 80-81 there is a hemiola and all instruments are playing which brings the ritornello to our attention, (whereas in the episode it is quieter as only a few instruments are playing). The function of the episodes is to modulate between keys - we first hear the ritornello in G major from bars 1-83, but then it returns in E minor from bars 137-157. It returns a third time in C major from bars 209-235, * in B minor from bars 323-345 and then finishes at bar 427 in G major again. Bach also uses 2 common harmonic devices which help make the tonality clear and functional. From bars 97-103 he uses a circle of 5^{ths} going from G to C, to F to B to E to A and finishing on D. Also, a Neapolitan 6^{ths} is used in bar 151 which adds brief chromatic colour.

The structure of the String Quartet is arch form. Section A is from bars 1-28 but the tonality is very

ambiguous - especially in the first 7 bars where we hear all 12 pitches of the chromatic scale. Shostakovich also uses chromatic tonality by moving through the triads of E minor, E major, E \flat major, D major at the start of the quote from his first Symphony (bar 13). However the tonality is functional at bars 25-27 as Shostakovich uses a perfect cadence to firmly establish the key of C minor.

The B section is characterised by the introduction of the tonic and dominant pedal notes held by the Viola, Cello and Violin II. This makes the tonality crystal clear (C minor), despite the chromatic melody played by the Violin I. Section C begins at bar 55 and is defined by a new 2 bar melodic line played by the Violin I and II. At the beginning of the quote from his 5th Symphony, Shostakovich establishes a C major tone by the Violin I playing an E natural. However at the homorhythmic section of the DSCH motif at bars 79-82, Shostakovich uses simple but unrelated root position triads moving through the keys of G major, E \flat minor, F major which makes the tone vague as he harmonises the DSCH motif in a chromatic way. Dissonance is used in bar 82 to further add to the ambiguous tone. However the introduction of the tonic and dominant pedal notes in section B1 (bar 87) reinforces the key of C minor once more.

However Shostakovich adds a third to the chord this time because the Viola plays a C in the A minor chord at bar 87 - this adds warmth to the sombre and ~~de~~ depressing atmosphere. The section A1 at bar 95 is characterised by the restatement of the DSCH motif played homorhythmically (not imitative like section A). The end of the movement enharmonically changes to a G \sharp ready for

the second movement.

* At bar 202, the Virtuistic Violin Solo changes from a G major scale to a dominant 7th chord in G which prepares (dominant) for the return of the Citarrella 7 bars later in C major at bar 209.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has itemised many features of the Poulenc both classical and 20th century. To score full marks is relatively easy if the learning has been done. The same is true in the second essay comparing the Bach and Shostakovich works.



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Examiner Tip

These questions require thorough preparation and this can be effectively done as the question format is quite predictable. It is worth knowing that for the ten mark question, seven points and three locations will secure full marks, and in the eighteen mark question, twelve valid points and six locations will equate to full marks.

The best essays had a plan (often in tabular format) which was then converted into prose.

Question 3(b)

The same comments as made about the previous essays apply equally for 3b.

If you answer part (a) put a cross in the box .

If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box .

i) Se Quena La Chumbambá takes its influences from the countries of Spain, the African continent and the genre of salsa. This is due to the slave trade and the song is ~~for~~ a son montuno, meaning that the farmers could sing it at work.

~~One~~ of the Spanish influences in the piece is the virtuosic cuatro solo heard first at the beginning when it outlines the tonic and dominant chords, keeping a solid chord progression throughout the music. It makes strong use of the harmonic minor scale, ~~in~~ in G, which is a strong Spanish influence, as well as the fact that the only chord progression

heard in the song is the repetitive pattern of $Gm - D^7 - D^7 - Gm$, giving the song a strong tonal feel as well as a hypnotic rhythm. The song is an example of early salsa because there are no brass instruments heard in the piece, which is used more recently for dancing.

Although much of the percussion heard in the music is influenced by African origin, the use of the 3:2 son clave is an important feature of the Spanish influence. It first enters at bar 5 of the music but is so pervasive that it is sensed even in the monophonic ~~the~~ texture created by the cuatro solo at the beginning of the song. It is a repetitive pattern of 5 notes and acts as a metronome, adding to the hypnotic feel of the piece. *

The other strong Cuban influence in the piece is the African continent. The most important African feature in the piece is the use of call and response from the Pregon (caller) and the Coro (response). The Pregon

sings a fixed tune in verse ~~one~~, and after this he improvises, whereas the Coro sings a fixed melody throughout. The song also makes use of syncopation, another strong African influence, and the piece itself begins on an anacrusis, giving the music a syncopated feel from the start. The percussion is also important; while the claves play a repetitive ~~scenario~~, the bongos play simple quaver patterns ~~with~~ and improvise later on while the maracas play mostly crotchets against the son clave. These elements combined in a clash of cultures formed Cuban music and these elements are all heard in the song.

* Another part of the hypnotic feel created by the piece is the use of Anticipation Bass, where the ~~the~~ tonic note of the chord in the next bar is anticipated on the last beat of the previous bar, which is an influence of a lot of Spanish music.

ii) The Lamb by John Tavener is in strophic form, as both verses make use of the same music, and although there are no bar lines or time signature, the ends of lines ^{of the poem} are indicated on the score by dashes. Verse one begins with the soprano (~~the~~ ^{falsetto}) singing a monophonic line of music, and this is then joined by the ~~soprano~~ ^{also} singing the same line in unison, creating a homophonic texture. ~~The~~ The verses are thought to have their own ternary structure (ABA'). Bars 1-4 of verse 1 make up the first A section, bars 5-6 make up section B and bars 7-10 make up the final section A', which is a modified repetition of section A. As there is no chorus, this same structure is heard in ~~the~~ Verse 2.

Unlike the Lamb, *Après un Rêve* ~~is~~ is in modified strophic form with no chorus; the music used in the first two verses is the same,

However the third verse is modified to relate to the "Alas" of the person waking up. The song begins with ~~the~~ a one bar introduction, introducing the key as C minor through chordal repetition. The sections in the song are ~~not~~ not particularly defined by key, but the first two verses of the song use long arch shaped melodic phrases, which is a classic feature of the Romantic era. The third verse introduces a sudden contrast in dynamics to convey heightened levels of emotion.

The Lamb begins with a single monophonic line of music, instantly creating ambiguity in the tonality, as it begins on G, and there is no given key signature. Biconality is created when the alto enters in bar 2, singing an inversion of the soprano line, contrasting G major against the

new key of E^b major. In bars 7-10, Taverner creates ambiguity in tonality by introducing the Aeolian mode on E, as there is no raised 7th in the music (D[#]). However, the tonal centre of E minor is affirmed at bar 10 when a perfect cadence of B-E is created by all four voices. Verse 2 begins ~~at~~ as bar 1 did, but with the voices doubled; soprano with tenor and alto with bass. Some parts are even sung in octaves to give a slightly stronger sense of tonality. At bar 18, Taverner makes use of an expressive Am⁹ chord to convey the emotion through the music, giving the ambiguous sense of tonality a surge of power. However, the piece ends with a long perfect cadence from B-E, created by augmentation of previous phrases, leaving little doubt in the mind of the listener that the piece is in E minor mode, referring to the scale of the Aeolian mode on E heard earlier, although Taverner hints at modality, biconality and major keys throughout, just by using 7 notes.

By contrast, *Après un Rêve* gives a stronger sense of tonality by beginning with block chords of C minor, affirming this as the tonic key. However, like the *Lamb*, modes are hinted at by Faure's use of false relations, when the B^b of the singer pulls against the B natural of the piano part, creating both dissonance and a sense of ambiguity in the key. Most dissonances heard in the music are not prepared for or resolved, and although most of the vocal phrases make use of the C minor scale, a sense of ambiguity in tonality is created through Faure's use of expressive B^b's and D^b's, creating minor 7th and 9th chords throughout, the first example of this being at bar 3. The song has a tendency to modulate to unrelated keys; for example, Verse 3 is in B^b minor to express the heightened emotion of the lyrics, and this

is itself a modulation from F minor, the subdominant of C minor, earlier on in the piece. The use of these modulations is a typical trait of Romantic music. The piece ends with a perfect cadence from G minor to C minor, affirming C minor as the tonal centre through the piece. This final cadence is strengthened by Faure's use of chromaticism and dissonance heard in the music.



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Examiner Comments

The essay on stylistic features of 'Se quema la chumbamba' secured a relatively easy full marks for many of the candidates. There are lots of features about the instruments, harmony and rhythm that contribute to its genre as Cuban Son. The second essay comparing the Faure and Tavener vocal works was a little more demanding but nevertheless had many credit points in the mark scheme.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should draw up an essay plan as these tend to lead to concise, fluent and cohesive answers. Without a plan, points are frequently repeated, and candidates switch randomly between works, often making incorrect statements as they have forgotten where they are! Again, if candidates have difficulty with written prose, a bullet pointed answer/ tabular format might be best for them.

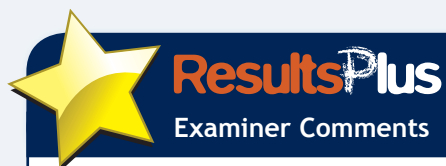
Question 4(a)

This question should be quite straight-forward as all the notes are given on the score. If these have been taught, this is a straightforward 5/8 marks every year.

(5)

Bar 1, beats 1 and 2	Ia
Bar 1, beat 3	II b
Bar 2, beat 1	V ⁷ a
Bar 2, beat 2	Ia
Bar 2, beat 3	Vb
Bar 3, beat 1	Ia

(b) Identify the key in bars 9–12.

**Examiner Comments**

This full mark answer demonstrates correct chords precisely defined with inversion symbols, added notes etc.

Question 4(b)

Key identification. Clues are given on the skeleton score, including added accidentals, chords, melody direction, cadences etc.

Question 4(c)

The pedal is a common device and one studied at GCSE level. This particular example was actually a tonic pedal as the music at that point has modulated to F major. However, 'pedal' on its own would suffice for the mark.

Note: some candidates wrote 'drone' which has properties of a pedal but were awarded no marks.

Question 5

The completion of five chords should be quite straightforward but reveals many problems each year, including consecutive 5ths and 8ths, augmented intervals, chords with wrong notes, poor part-writing, doubled leading notes etc.

This year, the use of a minor key caused extra problems and it is advised that more practice is needed in this mode.

- 5 Complete the music below for SATB voices in short score, choosing suitable chords. Some credit will be given for the appropriate use of non-harmonic notes. Some space for rough work is given on page 15, but you must write your answer on the score below.

(12)



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Examiner Comments

This example is clear. 5 correct chords for 10/12 marks and 2 passing notes for extra credit = 12/12.

The candidate displays good understanding of vocal part-writing, with a high tenor part and strong contrary motion bass to the treble. The three last chords form a stock Ic-V7-I cadence.



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Examiner Tip

The last three chords will often form a traditional progression and should be completed first. Then the first two chords can be worked to complete the passage. Candidates are advised to use only primary and secondary triads and to keep things simple. Many passing notes often cause errors in part-writing. Only a maximum of two marks is allowed, so it is best just to write in two examples.

Finally, do not forget the all-important consecutive checklist - SA/ST/SB/AT/AB/TB. It is surprising how many candidates do not carry this out and lose many valuable marks!

It was found that many candidates performed well in one or two areas of the paper, but clearly had also neglected other aspects of the unit. There were examples of excellent essays but poor harmony work etc. This is a shame as a high aggregate mark can be obtained from working at the unit as a whole. As a general comment, the weakest answers were in questions 1 and 2 and some of the strongest in the essay questions which had obviously been thoroughly well learnt and revised.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw mark boundary	80	61	54	47	41	35
Uniform mark scale boundary	120	96	84	72	60	48

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