



# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2022**

**GCE Music 9MU0 03**

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## Introduction

In this paper, candidates are required to show knowledge and understanding of musical elements, language and context, in relation to music they have studied through the set works and also to unfamiliar music. They are required both to demonstrate and apply musical knowledge – Assessment Objective (AO)3, and use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements – Assessment Object (AO)4.

Section A of the paper comprised Questions (Q)1-4 and was worth 50 marks. Q1-3 were based on excerpts from set works from three areas of study, with an audio track and skeleton score. Q4 consisted of an aural dictation question of pitch and rhythm. Section B, worth 50 marks in total, comprised an essay question based on a piece of unfamiliar music, worth 20 marks, and an essay focussing on a set work, worth 30 marks.

In the listening questions, candidates were tested on aural skills being applied to the excerpts. This included identification of instruments, playing techniques, intervals, keys, cadences and musical devices. Candidates were also required to write more fully and describe particular musical elements, for example the melody and rhythm of a specific passage, or draw a comparison between two passages.

Q5 tested the ability of the candidate to write about an unfamiliar piece of music that was related to one area of study, in relation to the musical elements and programmatic nature of the question. An audio track was provided, but no skeleton or illustrative score.

Q6 required candidates to write an essay from a choice of four options, each from a different area of study, based on a set work. Candidates were presented with three musical elements on which to focus. No audio was given but an illustrative excerpt of a portion of the score was provided in the resource booklet.

For both Q5 and Q6, candidates should aim to produce a well-structured essay. Essays should have a fluent use of musical vocabulary in relation to specific musical elements and with a musical explanation of the feature and the effect created. Essays should make links with the context. Candidates should refer to a wide variety of examples of other relevant pieces of music, which have been embedded throughout the essay, showing some knowledge of the linked piece, in order to justify their observations.

This year, due to the disruption of learning with the Covid pandemic, candidates were given Advance Information as to which set works would feature in the exam in Questions 1-3 and Question 6, and the area of study for Question 5.

One area to highlight is the importance of time management, which is entirely in the hands of the candidate for this examination. Quite frequently, it was clear that Section A had been approached thoroughly, but Section B suffered from insufficient time, with short or insubstantial essays.

The examination is 2 hours 10 mins and it is advisable not to spend any longer than one hour on Section A, leaving roughly 1 hour 10 mins to complete the Section B essays. It is essential that candidates approach the exam with a clear time plan of how long to spend on each question and adhere strictly to this structure.

It is advisable to practise writing timed essays as part of examination preparation. Candidates should ensure that handwriting is legible and does not deteriorate when under pressure. Candidates should also be encouraged to attempt all questions.

This report will provide guidance on each question and give examples of candidates' work for questions of more than one mark and where the mark scheme is more complex.

## Question 1 (a)

This question required candidates to describe the melody in bars 1-4.

There were many good answers, with conjunct, *legato*, leap of a 5th, being the most popular responses.

Please note that 'slurred' is not an acceptable alternative for *legato* and articulation must be described as *staccato* or *legato*.

It is important that candidates can describe the musical features of the start of a piece or main themes, such as the 1st subject in a sonata form piece.

This is a very good response, with four accurate musical features.

The candidate notices the leap but due to it being such a distinctive feature they need to be more specific, and state the interval.

(a) Describe the melody at bars 1 to 4.

(3)

◦ This melody is the first part of the first subject

◦ It begins on the dominant and features consonant leaps, but mostly uses conjunct movement. 4 bar phrase length.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks could be given for:

- First subject
- Begins on the dominant
- Conjunct
- 4-bar phrase

Total: 3 Marks (Maximum)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Learn musical features of important themes

## **Question 1 (b)**

It was clear that candidates found questions of aural perception (intervals, chords, cadences, keys) a more challenging area. They should try to practise these throughout the A level Music course.

Whilst some candidates recognised the imperfect cadence, others gave different types of cadences or confused perfect and imperfect cadences in Q1b and Q1f.

## Question 1 (c)

In this question, candidates had to compare two passages of music, noting the differences.

Many candidates recognised in the second passage, that the melody was in the piano, with some identifying the added cello, chromatic writing and countermelody.

Credit was given for features relating to bars 9-12, rather than bars 1-4.

This is a well-organised response, with three valid features for this 2-mark question.

The candidate has clearly thought about the role of each instrument in turn; piano, then violin, followed by cello.

They do not need to state that the violin plays the melody in bars 1-4 because this would not gain credit.

If they wanted to develop their response about the music of the violin in bars 9-12, they would have needed to be more specific.

1 (c) Compare bars 9 to 12 with bars 1 to 4, noting the differences.

(2)

The melody from bars 1-4 moves from the violin to the <sup>right</sup> ~~left~~ hand of the piano  
while the violin ~~plays~~ <sup>Plays</sup> in a ~~more~~ <sup>more</sup> accompanying fashion. The cello enters for longer  
holding a pedal then descends chromatically.



Marks are available for:

- Melody in piano [1]
- Cello enters [1]
- Chromatic [1]

Total: 2 Marks (Maximum)



Read the question carefully and only state differences.  
Only write about bars 9 to 12.

## Question 1 (d)

In this question candidates had to explain how the composer created excitement in a particular passage of music.

Many candidates identified the sequence, which was ascending, the higher pitch and the *crescendo*. Candidates were not required to expand upon the mood created, but they did need to select which musical features created excitement.

This is an extremely good response in which the candidate is focussed on musical features that create excitement or build up to a climax.

They do not include irrelevant features that do not match the mood.

If candidates identify a sequence, it is always sensible to include the direction.

2 (d) Explain how the composer creates excitement in bars 14 to 16.

(2)

The leaps in the piano reach higher until and octave interval creating  
and cells  
a sense of climax building. The violin has an ascending sequence adding  
to the sense of a building climax.



Marks are available for:

- Higher [1]
- Octave leaps [1]
- Ascending [1]
- Sequence [1]

Total: 2 Marks (Maximum)



Only select musical vocabulary which relates to the mood stated in the question.



## Question 1 (e)

Candidates found this question challenging. It was a large harmonic interval of a compound 3rd/10th, to create this textural duet between the cello and violin.

## Question 1 (f)

In this question, candidates were asked to describe the texture of a passage of music.

Frequent answers were that it was monophonic, but candidates needed to state that this was at the beginning.

Melody and accompaniment/melody-dominated homophony was a popular response. It is important to note that if candidates use the latter term they do not abbreviate it to MDH. This is not a recognised musical acronym.

This is a good response.

The candidate uses the bar number from the skeleton score to demonstrate the location of the start of the monophonic violin melody.

(f) Describe the texture at bar 23 beat 3 to bar 25.

(2)

There is a monophonic violin for 2 beats in bar 23  
The piano is playing individual chords between the monophonic  
violin sequence



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

- Monophonic in bars 23 = starts monophonic [1]
- Piano playing chords between violin [1]

Total: 2 Marks



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

If the musical feature changes, use location words such as starts or ends

### **Question 1 (g)(i)**

Questions of aural perception were a challenging area on this paper and do require regular practice throughout the course.

It is important that candidates state the musical quality of the interval (major, minor, perfect) as well as its size.

Question 1gi was a minor 7th, approached in a descending direction.

### **Question 1 (g)(ii)**

Question 1gii was a major 6th approached in an ascending direction.

### **Question 1 (h)**

Questions of aural perception were a challenging area on this paper and do require regular practice throughout the course.

It is important that candidates are aware which keys are most likely to assist them with aurally working out the modulation. In this case, it was a modulation to a closely related key from G minor, to the relative major of Bb major.

### **Question 1 (i)**

Quite a number of candidates recognised the perfect cadence, although slightly fewer than the imperfect cadence in 1b. Perfect and imperfect cadences were sometimes confused or other cadences chosen. It is important that candidates practise identifying throughout the course and can recognise the distinctive sounds of each type of cadence.

Question 1(i) was a multiple choice question identifying the year the piece was completed. Candidates had good success with this question. It is important to learn contextual information, such as dates of composition, both for the listening questions and Question 6.

## Question 2 (a)(i)

This question required candidates to name the instrument playing the accompaniment at the start of the excerpt. Many identified it correctly as electric guitar: stating guitar was not sufficient for credit.

## Question 2 (a)(ii)

As a follow-on question, candidates had to describe the music played by this instrument in the opening bars.

The *arpeggio* accompaniment was a very popular answer. Very few candidates wrote about the sonority created by the electric guitar effects or were able to go into the musical detail, particularly towards the end of the specified passage.

The candidate has embedded two points for credit within the first sentence, the fact that it is a broken chord, which opened the piece, by ascending and then descending.

This is a feature that occurs only at the start, in bar 1: nowhere else in that passage does it ascend and descend, which is why the location is needed for credit.

(ii) Describe the music played by this instrument at bars 1 to 4.

(2)

- opens with an ascending broken chord figuration  
which then descends  
- provides melodic interjections between vocal parts



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

- Opens with = starts with an ascending broken chord [1]
- figuration which then descends [1]

Total: 2 Marks



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Where there is a unique musical feature eg that occurs only at the start or end, state the location

## Question 2 (b)

In this question, candidates needed to describe the melody of a particular passage. This was answered well by candidates, with popular responses being descending, *arpeggio*, repeated. Some mistook the repetition incorrectly, for being a sequence.

It took a little time for the candidate to reach the answer of 3rds.

If there is a pattern such as an *arpeggio*, it is always best to describe with specific vocabulary, rather than disjunct or leaps.

(b) Describe the melody at bar 5 to bar 7 beat 2.

(2)

Leap followed by  
Disjunct ^ descending falls in 3rds.

The melody is repeated twice.



Marks were available for:

- Descending [1]
- 3rds [1]
- Repeated [1]

Total: 2 Marks (Maximum)

## Question 2 (c)(i)

This question required candidates to name the wind instrument that entered at bar 13.

Some identified it correctly as bass clarinet but there was a wide variety of answers such as saxophone, clarinet and other instruments.

Always learn the instrumentation of the set works.

## Question 2 (c)(ii)

As a follow-on question, candidates had to describe the music played by this instrument in these two bars.

Popular answers were low, leap of a 5th, syncopated, chromatic, ascending.

It is important to note that the unison doubling only occurred at the beginning, and not in the second half of this passage.

This is a good answer, with four accurate observations.

Where the candidate writes the same part as the electric guitar, they needed to state 'at the start' because that only occurred at the beginning, and not in the second half, of this passage.

(ii) Describe the music played by this instrument in bars 13 to 15.

(3)

The bass clarinet's role is mainly to link different sections together. It plays the same part as the electric guitar. It plays a long note followed by a short staccatoed note followed by rests. Then another long note followed by ~~a chromatic~~ ascending chromatic semiquavers.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks were available for:

- Long note [1]
- Rests [1]
- Ascending [1]
- Chromatic [1]

Total 3 Marks (maximum)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

For questions of 3 or 4 marks, make sure that you include sufficient technical points

## Question 2 (d)

Candidates were required to describe the vocal melody and rhythm in a particular passage.

Greater success was seen with rhythm, with popular answers being triplets, syncopation, long notes.

The melody was very different at the beginning and the end, so the location was required for credit.

## Question 2 (e)

This was a multiple choice question identifying the year in which the album was released.

Candidates had good success with this question: it is important to learn contextual information such as dates of composition both for the listening questions and Q6.

This is a good answer, featuring two typical rhythmic features.

The bar number is an acceptable alternative for the location of the end and the candidate gives two correct alternatives to describe the music at that point.

(d) Describe the vocal melody and rhythm in bar 25 beat 3 to bar 28.

(3)

The melody uses a triplet in bar 25 beat 3 followed by a long sustained note. The melody has a zig-zag shape. Bar 28 has a repeated ascending melody line.



Marks were given for:

- Triplet [1]
- Long note [1]
- Bar 28 = end repeated ascending [1]

Total: 3 Marks



Where there is a unique musical feature which occurs only at the start or end, state the location

### Question 3 (a)(i)

Candidates were asked to name the type of ensemble playing in this piece.

Many identified the correct answer as string orchestra/ensemble or strings. However, some candidates opted for a chamber music ensemble such as a string quartet or quintet. These were not acceptable, because there were audibly multiple instruments to each part and a chamber music ensemble would not be typical of the genre.

### Question 3 (a)(ii)

As a follow-on question, candidates had to identify three playing techniques used in the excerpt. All of the possible options from the mark scheme were seen in responses, although some confused articulation with playing techniques.

(ii) Identify **three** playing techniques used in the excerpt.

(3)

Pizzicato str. used

legato is used.

double stopping is used.



Marks were given for:

- Pizzicato [1]
- Double stopping [1]

2 marks



Know the playing techniques used in each set work



### Question 3 (b)

This question required candidates to describe the music of the first two bars.

There were many full answers, with a large mark scheme. It is important that candidates can describe the musical features of the start of a piece.

This is an excellent answer, packed full of musical vocabulary.

It shows thorough knowledge of the musical features heard at the start of the piece.

The only inconsequential slip that the candidate makes is not specifying that syncopation is in bar two and bar one is on the beat.

(b) Describe the music of the first two bars.

(2)

*Fortissimo syncopated stab chords are heard played homophonically and homorhythmically. The chord heard is a Hitchcock chord which is a B<sup>b</sup> minor chord with a major 7.*



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks were available for:

- *Fortissimo* [1]
- Stab chords [1]
- Homophonic /homorhythmic [1]
- Hitchcock chord [1]
- B<sup>b</sup> minor chord [1]
- with a major 7<sup>th</sup> [1]

Total: 2 Marks (Maximum)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Learn musical features of the start of each piece or of important themes

### Question 3 (c)

A pleasing number of candidates identified the pedal note.

### Question 3 (d)

In this question, candidates were asked to compare two passages of music.

It should be noted that marks were available for writing about bars 11-14 and no credit would be given for information about bars 5-8.

Candidates often find comparison questions challenging and these two passages contained many similarities and differences.

When candidates study the set works they should look out for areas of comparison.

Frequent answers were:

- same melody
- melody an octave higher
- louder

Very few of the other points on the mark scheme were accessed.

This is a very typical candidate response, with the two most usual points for credit.

They make an attempt to write about the *ostinato* in the cellos and double basses but lack the technical terminology and accuracy.

However, they have sufficient points for full marks on this question.

(d) Compare bars 11 to 14 to bars 5 to 8.

(2)

b. 11-14's melody ~~and~~ is the same as b. 5-8 but played up an octave. Cello and double bass play the same repeated crotchet in both phrases.



Marks were given for:

- Melody is the same [1]
- Melody up an octave [1]

Total: 2 Marks



Look out for areas of comparison when studying the set works

### Question 3 (e)

This question required candidates to describe the melody in bars 37-44.

There were many good answers with *legato*, ascends and descends, conjunct, and crotchets, being the most popular responses.

Please note that 'slurred' is not an acceptable alternative to *legato* and articulation must be described as *staccato* or *legato*.

Candidates often did not write about the phrase structure or the range of the phrases. It is important that candidates can describe the musical features of important main themes.

This is a good response, with four correct features although the candidate did not need to name the instrument when describing the melody.

(e) Describe the melody at bars 37 to 44.

(4)

The main melodic line, played by the violin plays conjunct crotchet notes that start off by rising but descends the second time it's played through. A similar melodic line is played, in a lower tessitura the second time.



Marks were given for:

- Conjunct [1]
- Crotchet [1]
- Rising and descends [1]
- Lower *tessitura* second time [1]

Total: 4 Marks



Learn musical features of important themes.

For questions of 4 marks make sure that you include sufficient technical points.

## Question 4

Many candidates had very good success with the aural dictation question and it was extremely pleasing frequently to see full marks.

In general, candidates completed the compound time rhythms with accuracy. It is important to check that every bar has the correct number of beats, to listen out carefully for dotted rhythms and for any areas of repetition, such as the final bar.

Pitches provided a greater challenge and if the octave leap had not been correctly notated, subsequent pitches were likely to be incorrect.

Consider the accidentals necessary for the key and listen carefully for semitones. Although the middle part moved in step, practice working with intervals would be useful for the end of the excerpt.

Candidates may have noticed that there was some repeated material from the given opening and ending: the D to A pitches at the start of bars 1 and 2 and the repeated rhythms in bar 4.

When examiners mark this question, they apply the instructions in the mark scheme about marking pitches and rhythms from the beginning and from the end and then any remaining unmarked music in the correct context of the bars.

Different versions of beaming are not penalised, this being a test of ear, rather than theory.

Practise working with different types of intervals to help with pitch dictation and intervals questions in Section A.

Add up the number of beats in each bar.

Work from both the beginning and end of the given material.

Look out for any repetition from the given material.

4 Listen to Track 4.

Complete the melody in bars 2 to 4.



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Examiner Comments

Rhythm

The first eight rhythms are correct and working backwards, the final three rhythms are correct.

There is only one inaccuracy, which was the missing dot from the quaver at the start of bar 4.

Pitch

The first pitch is correct but leaping a 7th, instead of an octave, meant that subsequent pitches were incorrect and working backwards from the end, no further pitches are correct. There was one accurate pitch placed in the correct context of the bar, the D quaver at the end of bar 3, and this gained credit.

11 correct rhythms

2 correct pitches

Total: 5 Marks

## Question 5

This question required candidates to use their aural skills to identify musical features from an unfamiliar piece.

Candidates had to draw upon their knowledge and understanding of a particular genre related to an area of study – in this case, music for film – and link their observations to the question. They were required to justify their musical features with examples of relevant works.

The question states, "Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music." It is a requirement of the question to write about examples of other music and this should occur frequently throughout the essay.

The indicative content mark scheme is large and examiners are not expecting candidates to cover everything on the mark scheme. It would not be possible in the time allowed and candidates would not be able to create a meaningful discussion. Marking takes place using the levels-based mark scheme and never by adding up points.

With knowledge of the area of study from the Advance Information, it might have been expected that candidates would come prepared for the examination. They should have been prepared with relevant examples of other music and typical stylistic features of the genre, including, but not limited to: large orchestra, typical instruments, playing techniques, through-composed, motifs, varied dynamics and texture.

The most successful essays:

- made an observation with use of technical musical vocabulary
- explained the musical effect of that feature
- linked the musical feature to a specific relevant work and explained how it had been used in the linked piece

These essays demonstrated a wide and interesting variety of other relevant works. They went on to give a brief explanation as to how the same feature was used in the linked piece, showing knowledge of that piece.

Candidates who approached the essay by giving an account in chronological order often had less success and suffered by falling into a pattern of repetition or omitting particular musical elements. It is not necessary, nor recommended, that candidates relate features to timings on the audio track.

It is essential that candidates allow sufficient time to listen to the audio track several times, make notes, plan and then write their Q5 essay.



It was pleasing to see candidates use the first page of the Q5 answer area for this purpose. Candidates might like to consider each of the elements in turn: Melody, Harmony, Tonality, Structure, Sonority, Texture, Tempo, Metre and Rhythm, Dynamics.

Whilst no compulsory time-length is given to complete Q5, the Pearson essay-writing guidance document recommends that candidates spend at least 70 minutes on Section B, which could be a minimum of 30 minutes on Q5 and 40 minutes on Q6.

Candidates are advised to:

- Interpret the question by highlighting key words
- Listen to the unfamiliar piece a few times and make a plan before writing the essay
- Organise the essay by musical elements
- Use the eight musical elements as a check list
- Include examples of relevant works throughout the essay
- Reference the linked piece with composer, piece title and movement, if from a larger work
- Show some knowledge of the linked piece in order to justify

To create a discussion:

- Identify a musical feature, explain it musically: how it links to the question, connect it with another piece of music and explain the connection
- Link the musical features to the question
- Write about the musical justification of the composer's intentions
- Leave enough time to plan and write the essay

This is a well-structured essay, with an opening introduction placing the piece in context and even identifying the composer.

The candidate has clearly planned the essay before writing, underlining key words in the question and writing notes, whilst listening, to identify the musical features.

Each element is organised into a paragraph addressing structure, melody, texture, harmony, sonority, tempo/metre/rhythm, with one or two musical observations made about each. Depending on the piece, some elements will be of more musical interest than others and may have more to discuss for that element. It is useful to try to identify the most salient features for each element.

Explanations are linked creatively to the question, although they do not always provide a musical justification.

Relevant works appropriate to the film music genre have been selected and whilst some provide a justification showing knowledge of the piece, others are more of an illustration.

The composer creates a compelling and exciting piece of film music through the handling of various elements. The piece has a feeling of post 20<sup>th</sup> century / romantic composition<sup>\*, but feels like it was fairly modern 2000s - 2020?</sup>, meaning it could be by the composer

John Williams. <sup>He</sup> who was heavily influenced by the work of late romantic musicians. The overall structure of the piece is conventional of a film score as it is through composed in the same way that the 'main Star Wars' Theme by Williams is also through composed allowing the music to enhance the depiction of what is going on screen in both scenarios the films are depicting the fight between 'good' and evil.

The melody depicts the two forces through the use of leitmotifs. Richard Wagner is known as 'the father of leitmotifs' as he ~~was~~ began using short melodic and motivic patterns to represent different characters, emotions and landscapes in ~~the~~ his cycle of operas 'Der Ring des Nibelungen'. The use of leitmotifs in this film + others allows the character of the hero or villain to be instantly recognisable + in a fight / battle scene helps the audience to distinguish who is winning the battle.

The texture of this piece of film music is predominantly homophonic although there are moments of polyphony where countering melodies <sup>in brass + strings</sup> seem to interact in a dialogue/battle of their own to depict the struggle occurring on screen. Herrmann uses polyphony within the cue 'The discovery' for the film Psycho. Where the contrapuntal string entries provide a fugal texture that builds and leads to tension building. Although the way the polyphony is developed is different the effect of unease it creates remains the same.

The harmony within the piece remains mainly functional in order to allow the traits of the opposing characters to shine through. John Ireland produces a similar harmonic effect in 'The overlanders' march by using parallel movement and STAB chords to help emphasise a sense of heroism. However the composer of this piece uses STAB chords to emphasise the sense of threat. Chromatism also occurs frequently that also helps build tension + unease.

There is a massive range of <sup>orchestral</sup> instrumentation used in this piece from a <sup>heavy</sup> brass section to a large string and percussion section with piccolo descants + glissandos up to notes. The expansiveness of the orchestra in this piece contrasts greatly to Herrmann's 'psycho' where only the string section is used in order to match the black and white restricted and monotone palette of the film as not to distract from the action occurring on screen. Whereas the composer of this piece utilises the

extensive range of instruments in order to enhance both the action of the battle and tension between the two very different forces of good and evil through harnessing differing timbres.

The rhythm also heightens the sense of atmosphere with semiquaver ostinato in the strings helping to increase the pace of the music along with contrasting held rhythms + legato rhythms. Both the rhythm and metre change in order to emphasise the changes occurring on screen. The same technique is used in the main theme of another film that depicts the fight between good and evil 'The Spiderman Theme' by Hans Zimmer also uses rhythmic ostinato + frequently changing metre to reflect the changes occurring on screen.

Overall each element helps to enhance what is happening on screen and helps provide the audience with different emotions whether that be heroism, tension, or an evil force. This composer uses typical romantic techniques to help convey the overall battle between good and evil.



This account provides an explanation of the elements in the unfamiliar piece: it is better than a description, but does not quite become a thorough explanation. Elements explained are linked to the question.

An interesting range of relevant works is linked to musical features for each of the elements and appears throughout the essay.

In most cases, the candidate justifies the connection and shows some musical understanding of that linked piece, but not always.

Use of musical vocabulary is very competent, although perhaps not excellent. It is unfortunate that some of the musical features from the plan are not included in the essay and do not become part of the discussion.

Generally, the candidate provides musical justification of the composer's intention.

On balance, this essay meets all the requirements of Level 4, placing it at the top of the band but not reaching into Level 5.

Level 4

Total: 15 Marks



Plan carefully whilst listening and before writing the essay.

Include examples of relevant works throughout the essay.

## Question 6 - General Information

Question 6 required candidates to show knowledge of three elements of one of the set works, or a movement, and they were given a choice of four set works from different areas of study.

Most importantly, candidates needed to use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements (AO4).

This was achieved by:

- giving musical explanations of the effect of their observation
- making links with the context in which the piece was created
- making connections with other relevant pieces of music

Candidates should try to embed links to relevant music consistently throughout the essay and give a short explanation as to how the composer has used that feature in the other piece.

The questions states, "Relate your discussion to other relevant works. These may include set works and other music." It is therefore a requirement of the question to write about examples of other music and examples should occur frequently, throughout the essay.

The first word of each essay question is 'discuss' and the essay should be written as a discussion, rather than simply providing a list of vocabulary, and musical features that occurred in the piece.

With knowledge of the four set works for the Question 6 essays from the Advance Information, examiners might have expected candidates to come prepared for the exam with:

- contextual information about the composer and piece
- relevant examples of other music
- typical musical features for the elements
- having practised essay writing skills

There were some good examples of essays for Q6. The best were clearly-structured, often organising musical features into a paragraph for each element.

Candidates were able to discuss the piece with a strong grasp of technical vocabulary across the three elements and were able to explain the musical feature of each element. Musical features were then linked to a relevant piece of music.

To provide a justification, they showed brief knowledge of this piece, rather than providing an illustration, which was simply naming the piece.

It is not necessary, nor recommended, that candidates refer to bar numbers. Some candidates over-relied on the illustrative pages of the score in the resource booklet. This resulted in them only writing about the first portion of the piece and the latter being entirely neglected.

Writing a chronological account was less successful, because it often resulted in repetition of musical features and imbalance of the elements. The illustrative pages, which represent approximately a third of the set work/movement, are provided simply as a helpful reminder. They should not be treated as a source document score to work through in the examination to write the essay.

The indicative content mark scheme is large and examiners did not expect candidates to cover everything on the mark scheme. It would not be possible in the time allowed and candidates would not be able to create a meaningful discussion. Marking takes place using the levels-based mark scheme and never by adding up points. Greater emphasis in this question is placed on discussing and explaining the effect of their musical observations so the piece of writing becomes an evaluative discussion.

Frequent issues seen were essays:

- without any contextual information
- lacking in discussion and musical explanation
- listing musical features
- with imbalanced elements, ie one that was neglected or less well-covered
- inconsistent references to relevant music
- that focussed on other elements not in the question
- that concerned other movements in the set work

Whilst no compulsory time length is given to complete Q5, the Pearson essay-writing guidance document recommends that candidates spend at least 70 minutes on Section B, which could be a minimum of 30 minutes on Q5 and 40 minutes on Q6.

## Question 6a

This was the third most-popular essay option.

Candidates tended to write most successfully about the element of Melody, often focussing on the embellished Lutheran hymn tune, ornamentation, melismatic, scalic, word painting.

Discussion of Texture was often reasonably well-written, with polyphonic, unison and heterophonic being frequent observations.

Tonality was probably least well-written, with candidates simply listing keys and not creating discussion or bringing in examples of relevant works.

The essay opens with a short and rather general contextual paragraph about Bach and the piece.

The candidate organises the essay clearly by paragraphs for each musical element.

Most information was given regarding the element of melody, with some attempt to explain the effect of the features.

Tonality is a rather brief list of keys, rather than any discussion, and texture lacks information beyond being contrapuntal.

References to relevant works are presented throughout the essay. Some are specific illustrations, but others are very vague, naming large multi-movement works such as Haydn's Creation or Bach's Passions. The candidate does not specify the movement, such as the aria or chorus, to make the connection more relevant.



J.S. Bach is one of the most well known and respected composers in musical history. Born in 1675, he is one of the most prolific composers of the baroque era despite primarily being an organist and cantor during his life at St Thomas's Church in Leipzig. Ein feste Burg is one of Bach's many chorales, a vocal work with orchestral accompaniment, written for reformation day. His second movement is an aria for soprano and bass with continuo, copper strings and oboe.

Bach uses Martin Luther's chorale melody in the soprano solo line which is doubled by the oboe. Bach embellishes this chorale melody with semiquavers, demisemiquavers, runs and trills in both soprano and oboe lines however there is more ornamentation in the oboe line. This ~~is~~ is similar to Bach's use of melodic embellishment and ornamentation in the viol da gamba line in the ~~aria~~ alto aria 'Es ist vollbracht' from the St John's Passion in which he similarly uses ornamentation in the instrumental part. In Ein feste Burg, this ornamentation creates virtuosic melodic interest and also creates a sense of joy and excitement.

The solo bass line is virtuosic and includes many fast runs of semiquavers such as the opening bass line in bar 9. This melodic line is also disjunct at times such as in bar 14. While the tessitura of the soprano melody is relatively small, the bass has a much wider range

of a 13<sup>th</sup>. Bach similarly uses a chorale melody in his cantata 'Wachet Auf' and it is a theme of many of his works. In the ~~long~~ runs of the bass and soprano lines, there are many melismas <sup>in often long phrases</sup>. \* →

This movement is in the key of D major. There's functional harmony throughout and only brief modulation to related minor keys of B and E minor later in the movement. D Major is also the key of many joyful baroque <sup>and classical</sup> works such as Haydn's 'Creation' and Handel's 'Zadok the Priest'. D major was considered to be the key that was used when relating to God or simply a key to evoke happiness.

The texture of this movement is contrapuntal throughout, the most common texture Bach uses and used in the Baroque era. Counterpoint is also used in almost all of Bach's preludes and fugues for keyboard. The continuo accompanies the vocal lines, ~~and~~ oboe and strings in a melody accompaniment texture. Continuo is used in ~~many~~ many baroque works and all cantatas through a figured bass in which the keyboard/harpichord player improvises the harmony to ~~set the~~ textually accompanying the melodies. Figured bass continuo is also used in Purcell's 'Music for a While' aria to accompany the soloist. Another example is in Bach's ~~passions~~ <sup>St</sup> John, Matthew and Luke passions in which the continuo is notably heard accompanying the tenor narrator and various other solo characters ~~and~~ in movements of recitative, arias and choruses.

In conclusion, this movement is a conventional aria of Bach's in which he follows many <sup>common</sup> baroque themes and ideas to write this Cantata.

These long melismatic phrases are similar to the word painting in Handel's Messiah in the movement "All we like sheep have gone astray" in which he uses extended melismas of *conquiesce rursus*.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This essay makes general links between the music and the context in which it was created.

The candidate makes general points about the musical elements with some explanation of effects.

Musical vocabulary is used, but inconsistently.

Attempts are made to refer to other works but with errors: some of the links to large works lack precision.

This response reaches the middle of the Level 2 mark band.

Level 2

Total: 10 Marks



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Explain musical features and the effect created

Try to balance the three elements

Be precise when referring to a large multi-movement work

## Question 6 (b)

This was the most popular essay option.

Candidates often wrote most successfully about the element of Sonority, with many fascinating features unique to this song.

The more detailed aspects of Harmony were perhaps less well-understood.

It is important with Tempo, Metre and Rhythm, that candidates address all three aspects, in order to approach this element fully and with balance.

This essay opens with contextual information about the album and stylistic features of popular music at that time.

It is not necessary to link examples of other music to contextual information.

The candidate writes rather briefly about the element of Harmony, but Sonority is covered more successfully, with some explanations.

They only write about rhythm in the element of Tempo, Metre and Rhythm. There were explanations of the musical vocabulary, and examples of other music were well-chosen although generally provided as illustrations.

Relevant examples of other music are included throughout the essay for each element, but pieces are named as an illustration, rather than explained with some musical knowledge as a justification. It is better to give one good example of other music, which is explained and discussed, rather than naming two examples, for a musical feature.

## PLAN: UNDER ICE

Harmony:	Sonority:	TMR:
Suspended chord Asus2 ✓	✓ synthesiser	Scotch snaps
relentless 3 quaver motif ✓	✓ Fairlight CMI	mainly quavers straight
avoids chords ✓		

### WL:

Sargeant Pepper, Evermore, Blue Weekend, Army Dreamer, View to Kill, Sweet Dreams, On Wenlock Edge, Helicopter Quartet, Tapestry, Here There Everywhere

Hounds of Love is one of eight Kate Bush albums that was released in 1985. The album is arranged into two suites, 'Hounds of Love' and 'The Ninth Wave' which can be considered a mini concept album. This was Bush's first experience of independently writing, singing and producing, which allowed for her self-taught experimental talent to be fully liberated. Although, she was already familiar with the process having signed with EMI age 16 after the guitarist in Pink Floyd heard her demo. The 80s was a decade where digital recording emerged along with the popularity of synthesisers and progressive rock. A Fairlight CMI was another development in music technology, that Bush was considered a pioneer in its usage. Bush claimed herself that she was inspired by an ~~eclectic~~<sup>eclectic</sup> group of sources like Emily Brontë as well as Stephen King along with the genres of electronic, folk, avante

~~gtr~~ guitar and classical music. Under Ice is featured on 'The Ninth Wave' suite of the album.

In Under Ice, Kate Bush harmonically relies heavily on the use of suspended chords to give the piece a dramatic ending. This A sus2 chord is never resolved as Kate Bush melodically slides down in pitch using a chromatic portamento. This uncertain ending could be said to reflect the mood of the narrative, as part of the concept album. The idea behind 'The Ninth Wave' was to reflect the character falling in and out of consciousness that is arguably reflected therefore in Under Ice particularly in the unresolved chord. Concept albums are somewhat common within the pop industry, as noticeably recognised in 'Sargeant Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band' by the Beatles recorded 20 years before Bush. The concept album is less frequent in modern pop, although is utilised by Wolf Alice in their pandemic release of 'Blue Weekend'. To have Under Ice contribute also to its wider context is an intellectual feature that would have allowed her music to stand out amongst other artists. This is crucial within the pop genre as the commercialisation of music became heavily prevalent in order to achieve success. Therefore, the suspended chord ending allows a deepened understanding for the narrative portrayed in the concept album.

Under Ice does spark harmonic interest by the fact that there is the avoidance of chordal harmony besides the very beginning of the intro and outro. This would appear particularly unusual due to the fact that pop music is often attributed to a repetitious chord pattern as the foundation of the song, and is noticeably criticised for this even today. Modern artists still face scrutiny today for arguably simplistic writing such as Taylor Swift with many of her songs like 'Champagne Problems' and "All Too Well (5 minute version)" using the same four chords throughout. This is what allows Kate Bush to set herself apart from other circulating artists in harmonically thinking

outside the conventions of pop, whilst still remaining commercially successful.

The sonority of the song Under Ice is largely dictated by her use of the Fairlight CMI. This piece of equipment allows her accompaniment to be digitally recorded, rather than hiring live instruments that create the stringed sound. Fairlight CMI had truly emerged in this decade, as Kate Bush was considered a pioneer in its usage, having also featured it in her 1980 song 'Army Dreamer'. There weren't many other artists in the 80s who utilised it also besides Duran Duran 'A View to Kill' mainly due to the cost of the equipment. However, it is demonstrative of how Kate Bush was able to use these technological advancements to produce an individualistic ~~yet~~ sound yet remain conventionally popular.

Another large influence on Under Ice is the use of synthesisers. This created the synth string accompaniment as opposed to live recordings. Along with Fairlight CMI, the synthesiser was truly emerging in the 80s and much more prevalent in all pop music of the 80s including Madonna's 'True Blue' and the Eurythmics 'Sweet Dreams are made of this'. These pieces are both infamous examples of the stylisation of 80s pop that saw all artists recognise this trend. This demonstrates culturally how rapidly technology was advancing in the industry as 20 years prior, tape loops were a more common device as relied upon by the Beatles in their album 'Revolver'. Therefore this shows how Kate Bush was able to use 'trending' electronic sounds in order to develop the narrative of Under Ice within its wider context as a concept album.

Rhythmically, Under Ice remains consistent in its relentless three quaver accompanying characteristic pattern. This idea sits with the synth strings and is the foundations

for which the piece is set. These three quavers allow the pulse to be clearly outlined which is useful in maintaining a grounded, yet simplistic, atmosphere. This ostinato pattern allows the conceptually driven lyrics to be accentuated that reflect the cold, mysterious atmosphere. Lyrics in pop music / progressive rock are usually a key feature in its composition as the words can easily translate the desired feel for the piece. This is noticeable in many works such as Carole King's 'Tapestry' where the music remains arguably simplistic to highlight the heartwarming lyrics like in 'Where You Lead'. Therefore, this shows Bush to recognise the need for some features to be restricted to shine a light on the imperative features that contributes to the narrative.

Furthermore, the piece Under Ice is rhythmically characterized by the incorporation of Scotch snaps. This is a syncopated dotted rhythm that is found in Bush's melodic line. This could be attributed to Bush's self taught background whereby ~~the~~ her choice of rhythms is more liberal. However, it could also relate to her inspirations of folk / avant garde genres that can occasionally hold ~~an~~ <sup>an unusual</sup> ~~improvisational~~ quirky mood. This can be demonstrated by Stockhausens 'Helicopter Quartet' as well as Vaughan Williams 'On Wenlock Edge' which are undoubtedly characteristic of their respective genres. This therefore shows how Bush is able to ~~cont~~ collectivise her eclectic range of inspirations to form a cohesive sound that remains commercially ~~successful~~ successful in the pop genre.

In conclusion, Under Ice demonstrates Kate Bush's individualistic sound that is achieved by the musical decisions regarding harmony, sonority and tempo, metre rhythm. It is with these elements that contribute toward the experimentally curious album with conceptually driven and carefully curated lyrics that allows Bush to achieve such commercial success.





There are relevant links between the music and the context in which it was created.

This is a clear response with explanations, which are better than general points. However, the elements are not balanced enough to become a controlled argument.

There is a satisfactory use of musical vocabulary.

Relevant works are used to illustrate.

This essay reaches the middle of Level 3.

Level 3

Total:16 Marks



For Tempo, Metre and Rhythm, check that you have written about all three concepts

## Question 6 (c)

This was the least popular essay option. Candidates often wrote most successfully about the element of Melody, with the characteristic features of this song.

The more detailed aspects of Harmony were perhaps less well-understood.

It is important with Structure not just to list the sections but to incorporate them into the discussion.

This essay opens with some very general points about Anoushka Shankar.

There is a tendency to list musical features of each element and not to explain or discuss them, lacking in that crucial AO4 aspect.

References to other music are inconsistent throughout the essay and are often a vague link.

Relevant works must be used to support correct musical features and in this essay, they are used in a general way to show other pieces with Indian influence.

Towards the end of the essay the candidate considers the area of Sonority, which was not in the question.

Born in 1981, Anoushka Shankar is the daughter of Ravi Shankar, a famous Indian Classical musician who collaborated with the Beatles. Following in her father's footsteps, Anoushka Shankar started releasing music as early as the age of 13 and is an internationally respected singer-songwriter. She has collaborated with Herbie Hancock (jazz pianist) and Joshua Bell (classical violinist). The album "Breathing Under Water" ~~was written by her and~~ contains a collaboration between Shankar and Sting another famous fusion artist.

The melody line is sung by Norah Jones, Shankar's half-sister, and has a relaxed, R&B style. The melisma on some syllables (eg: bar 8, "only"), is reminiscent of meend (pitchbends) used in Indian Classical music. The lyrics are in English and the general shape of the melody line is quite typical of a western pop song, however. The range of the melody is quite small and close knit; similar to how a rag is introduced in a piece of Indian Classical music. The vocal range in "Burn", the other set work, is similarly of a small range. At the end of the first verse, there is a long sustained note on Eb that then falls to Db; this is

somewhat similar to the Indian classical style of vocal music, where there is often melisma and long held notes. Furthermore, the sitar line at the beginning of the extract attempts to emulate the alankara section in an Indian Classical performance - a long introductory section. However, since alankara can take around 30 minutes to perform, Shankar has condensed her version into just 8 bars, in a way fusing the structure of Indian Classical music with western pop music structure.

The structure of "Easy" is intro, verse 1, <sup>verse 2</sup> link, instrumental, middle 8, verse 3, coda. Verse 2 is simply a repeat of verse 1's melodic/harmonic content. The other two set works are structured similarly, with "Breathing Under Water" having the simplest structure (4 sections plus coda). The structure of all three pieces are more similar to that of western pop songs, but the intro of "Easy" - content-wise - is more similar to that of an Indian Classical performance. "Jai Ho" from Slurdog Millionaire has a much more western-style structure but the title and lyrics have Indian influence. Similarly, although Sting's track "Jea Dreamer" is much more reminiscent of western pop music, there is <sup>Indian</sup> influence throughout (particularly in the harmony). It could be argued that it is difficult to blend the Indian Classical style of performance with a western pop song (as the duration of each one is very different; Indian Classical performances can last for hours whereas a pop song tends to average 3 minutes) but Shankar overcome the duration barrier by condensing the Indian Classical

structure and creating a unique sound world.

Shankar's base use of harmony is quite typical of western pop music; she uses a 3-chord hook (Db to Gb to Cb) that repeats throughout the song. Her instrumentation enhances her ability to work with interesting harmonies; sitars have sympathetic strings that vibrate when a main string is plucked, giving extra harmonies to each note & diversifying the sound world. She also used synthesizers to support the acoustic instruments; Agro-Celt Sound system also do this in their song "Eireanne" (Ireland) to further diversify the timbres & range of harmonies used. Shankar uses sus and add chords to take the harmony a step further and capture the listener's attention. The undulating, repetitive harmony also harks back to Indian classical music, where the harmonic ~~rate~~ pace is very slow.

Overall, Shankar blends unique Indian style melodies, fusion harmonies, and structures to create an effective mix of two different sound worlds.



General links are made between the music and the context.

Points are made but lack explanation.

Musical features are often listed and lack sufficient AO4 discussion.

Some attempts are made to refer to other works but with errors and inconsistency.

This essay reaches low Level 2.

Level 2

Total: 8 Marks



Do not list musical features: incorporate them into the discussion

Keep closely to the musical elements in the question

## Question 6 (d)

This was the second most-popular essay option.

Candidates often wrote most successfully about the element of Texture.

Often only the more basic features of Harmony were understood.

It is important with Tempo, Metre and Rhythm that candidates address all three aspects, in order to approach this element with balance.

This essay contains a short amount of contextual information at the start but the candidate incorporates context successfully, throughout the essay. They show knowledge of dates of composition and understanding of Stravinsky's style.

They cover several musical features for each of the elements, with some sense of explanation and discussion.

They address each of the aspects of Tempo, Metre and Rhythm.

Links to other music show relevant choices, which are embedded successfully throughout the essay, although with a combination of illustration and justification.

In Stravinsky's 1913 ballet "The Rite of Spring", commissioned <sup>for</sup> by Sergei ~~Diaghilev~~ Diaghilev's Ballet Russe after the success of The Firebird, 1910, Stravinsky uses an avant-garde approach to harmony, texture and tempo, metre and rhythm, evident in The Rites of Spring, in order to aptly portray the primitive story and to Nijinsky's choreography.

The harmony in ~~the~~ The Rites of Spring is very dissonant, which at the time was met with a mixed reception, reflecting Kandinsky's idea that "the dissonance of today is merely the <sup>consonance</sup> of tomorrow". There is a great deal of chromaticism, ~~for~~ for example in the woodwind at figure 17, and chromaticism between parts can make it seem almost a total, taking inspiration perhaps from Beethoven's Scherzo ~~and~~ grand breathing. ~~Abnormal~~ <sup>but the functions</sup> piece of 1911 ~~however~~ <sup>Stravinsky's</sup> ~~the~~ Rite of Spring is not actually considered ~~abnormal~~ <sup>abnormal</sup>. The use of chromaticism is not unusual for Stravinsky and he uses it here to reflect the angst and despair in the ballet, a technique also evident in his 1911 ballet Petruska. Be that as it may, some parts of The Rites of Spring seem diatonic on their own, e.g. the horn solo at figure 25, which treats a juxtaposition of diatonicism and chromaticism, described by Balzer as "horizontal diatonicism and vertical chromaticism". In general, the harmony is not functional as there are few cadence points or recognizable progressions, which creates disorder and



chaos. This can also be seen in the compositions of the Brno, notably those of the 2nd Viennese school, such as Webern's "Sechs Bagatellen", also composed in 1913. There is also use of a superimposed chord of  $E^b7$  over  $F^b$  major, which was in the opening bars of "The August of Spring", which was noted as a fingerprint of Stravinsky's work in Pieter Van der Toorn's book "Simply Stravinsky", and is also seen in Petruska, 1911, with a  $C\sharp$  major chord over an  $F\sharp$  major chord. In the Rite of Spring, this superimposed chord is clearly used by Stravinsky to create octatonic harmony, another stylistic fingerprint of Stravinsky's according to Van der Toorn. This octatonic harmony adds a new colour to the music and was a technique commonly used by students of Rimsky-Korsakov such as Stravinsky himself who also used it in his 1910 composition "The Firebird". Furthermore, this superimposed chord creates stable harmony, providing a unified sound to reflect the "stomping" on stage. There is also evidence of parallel 7<sup>th</sup> chords in the trumpets, creating a rich harmony seen also in Debussy's 1913 "Estampes" through the use of 7<sup>th</sup> chords. Finally, there is occasional evidence of functional harmony, such as the use of a drone at figure 26 to provide some grounding to the music.

Texture is also widely and variably used by Stravinsky in "The August of Spring". The section begins with chordal homophony, creating a strong, unified sound to reflect the aggressive choreography. There is also evidence of melody dominated homophony at figure 15 in the trumpet solo, allowing it to be heard when Stravinsky does as it is a key moment. As the piece progresses we see the development of a

chaotic polyphony in order to create a frantic atmosphere, seen also in Stravinsky's "Fireworks" to depict the fireworks exploding. This polyphony is achieved with the overlapping of fragmented ideas, under fingerprints recognised by Van der Meer, which just creates a juxtaposition of familiarity and chaos. This texture is also evident in Stravinsky's "Symphonies of wind instruments" to some extent. There is also evidence of heterophony at figure 28 in the flute to add melodic variation, a technique dating back as late as Beethoven's 1715/16 "Ein Fache lang ist unser Gott" to add interest. Lastly, there is also use of canon at figure 20 and imbrication at figure 21, allowing for more development of melody, whilst superimposed <sup>and parallel</sup> ~~two~~ lines and 5<sup>ths</sup> add new ideas thanks to the wide intervals.

Stravinsky's use of Tempo, Rhythm and metre is vital in "The Angers of Spring". Unlike other sections of the rite of Spring, "The Angers of Spring" remains for the most part in  $\frac{2}{4}$ , creating a sense of cohesion. This is reinforced by the use of homorhythm in the opening bars, reflecting the repetitive stamping of hooves. This is undermined by irregular off-beat accents in order to create a feeling of instability. The tempo is also very fast, which, paired with staccato semiquavers, creates a frantic atmosphere. There is also evidence of syncopation in the 4<sup>th</sup> horn solo to undermine the pulse, used also in Stravinsky's "Infernal Dance" in his 1918 ballet "Firebird". There are almost constant quavers throughout this movement which creates a driving force also evident later in "The Ancestral". However, Stravinsky adds frequent cross rhythms as this, such as the triplets in the trumpet at ~~the~~ figure 15, which ~~under~~ undercuts the

steady pulse. These triplets play a key role in the movement, and are passed around the wind sections in order to create a sense of cohesion among the choirs. There are also greatly varied note lengths, ranging from sextuplets semiquavers to ten minims, adding variation. There are also occasional ~~pass~~ fermatas, ~~such~~ such as at bar 145, which undo the sense of pulse, a technique used by Stravinsky's predecessors, such as in Mahler's Symphony No. 1, movement one, of 1888.

In conclusion, in Stravinsky's 'The Rite of Spring' from his staple work of the 20<sup>th</sup> century 'The Rite of Spring', Stravinsky uses creative and revolutionary techniques such as 'superimposed chords, atonal harmony and intricate rhythms, as well as many others discussed, in order to ~~convey~~ <sup>depict</sup> a wide range of ~~and~~ atmospheres to accompany the story of the ballet and the unusual choreography by Nijinsky, making it an exceptional ~~example~~ <sup>piece</sup> in early 20<sup>th</sup> century composition and cementing the Rite of Spring as a key ~~symphonic~~ <sup>signature</sup> composition and arguably the 'start' of 20<sup>th</sup> century composing.



This response develops relevant links in a very fluent way, throughout the essay.

This is certainly a thorough and clear response and on its way to becoming a controlled argument.

There is competent use of musical vocabulary.

Relevant works are used both to illustrate and justify points.

There is a combination of Level 3 and Level 4 characteristics, with enough positive features reach the Level 4 band.

Level 4

Total: 20 Marks



Always try to show some knowledge of the example of other music, to create a justification

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper candidates are offered the following advice:

### Exam Preparation

- Listen to the set works regularly, in order to become familiar with them, and be able to recognise different sections of the music
- Learn the key features of each set work, including instruments, common musical devices and keys
- Be able to describe important melodies, such as main themes or the start of a piece
- Know the context of each set work, including the date of composition, and be able to describe stylistic features in relation to the period in which it was written, or the genre to which it belongs
- Practise aural skills on a regular basis. This should include pitch and rhythm dictation, identifying intervals, chords, keys and cadences
- Intervals should be described both by a numeric description and the musical quality (eg major, minor, perfect)
- Listen widely to related repertoire for each area of study and set work. Perhaps create a listening list, which could include pieces from all areas of the A level Music course, such as pieces performed on your instrument /voice or pieces that have inspired your composing
- Include examples of other music relevant frequently throughout your Q5 and Q6 essays and for each musical element
- Other music should be referenced by naming the composer, piece and movement (if from a larger work). Do not only name the composer, or the piece
- Try to justify your example of other music by writing a small amount of information to describe the example and show why it is a good example. Simply naming the piece provides only an illustration
- Q5 and Q6 essays should be a discussion, and not a list of musical features. For each musical feature you should give a musical explanation of the feature and the effect that is created. Then link it to an example of wider listening with explanation as to how that feature is used in that piece
- Develop and practise essay writing skills to produce a well-structured piece of writing that forms a discussion of each element, with musical explanations and examples of other music, fluently throughout the essay.

## During the exam

- Manage your time effectively for the exam. Create a time schedule and keep closely to it, leaving enough time for Q5 and Q6. Do not over-spend time of the listening questions at the expense of the two essays; the essays are worth 50% of the exam. Practise writing essays under timed conditions and ensure that handwriting is legible
- The scores provided for Q6 are only a helpful reminder and represent a 3rd of the piece/movement. They should not be treated as a source document to be worked through in the examination
- Audio timings should not be referenced in the Q5 essay and bar numbers should not be referenced in the Q6 essay
- Always try to attempt questions and do not leave answers blank

## **Grade boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

