Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Music (1MU0/03)
Examination Paper Component 3 –
Appraising

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This is the third year of examination for this specification (1MU0) and therefore for this examination paper (1MU 03). **Teachers are advised to read Issue 3 of the specification which is available on the Pearson website.**

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/music-2016.html

This examination paper is based on the study of eight prescribed works over four Areas of Study. It assesses Assessment Objective three (AO3: Demonstrate and apply musical knowledge) and Assessment Objective four (AO4: Use appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music). Section A comprises eight questions. Questions 1 to 6 require candidates to respond to questions based on extracts taken from prescribed works. Question 7 requires candidates to complete a short dictation exercise. Teachers should note that from summer 2021 we will be making a change to question 7. Since the introduction of the specification the dictation question has been taken from a set work. From summer 2021, the dictation question will now be either from a set work or from a piece related to an Area of Study. Further details can be found on the Pearson website.

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/music.updates.html?article=%2Fcontent%2Fdemo%2Fen%2Fnews-policy%2Fqualifications%2Fedexcel-gcses%2FMusic%2Fgcse-music-change-to-dictation-question&pageTypes=

Question 8 is based on an unfamiliar piece of music (closely related to a set work). Candidates are provided with a skeleton score which appears in the examination paper. The final question on the examination paper, Section B, requires candidates to compare in detail a prescribed work with an unfamiliar work. Both pieces will come from the same Area of Study and will be accompanied by skeleton scores, which appear in the Source Booklet.

Question	Comments
1a	Many candidates were able to identify correctly this instrument. Inaccurate answers included bodhran and snare.
1b	There were many technological processes used in this passage. The most common correct responses were reverb, panning and use of samples.
1c	In previous years candidates have found questions which focus on melody hard. However, most candidates secured at least one mark here and there were a good range of correct responses including pentatonic, syllabic and descending.
1d	In this question candidates had to identify features characteristic of electronic dance music. Less-able candidates described features of the music without focussing on features associated with electronic dance music. The majority of candidates secured one mark for drone (harmony) but only most-able candidates were able to secure two or three marks.
2a	Candidates responded well and most secured one mark for roll.
2b	Most candidates were able to identify the correct rhythm played by keyboards and brass.
2c	This was another straightforward question and many candidates secured two marks. There were a wide range of correct responses including flute, violin and oboe.
2d	Many candidates found this question difficult. The most common correct responses were syllabic and some leaps.
2e	Most candidates responded well and secured at least one mark for syncopation (rhythm). Only most-able candidates were able to identify a harmonic feature which created a feeling of anticipation.
3a (i)	Most candidates recognised the sound of the violin.
3a (ii)	Most candidates were able to identify at least one rhythmic feature: common correct responses included triplets and dotted.
3b	Less-able candidates were able to secure one mark for either scalic or trills. Only most-able candidates were able to identify further melodic features.
3c	Most candidates were able to identify the correct texture.
3d	In this question candidates had to identify harmonic features characteristic of the Baroque period. Less-able candidates commented on forces, melody and texture. Common correct responses included functional and perfect cadences.
4a	Many candidates were able to identify the timpani.
4b	Most candidates responded well and identified either the cymbals or triangle.

4c	Only most-able candidates were able to identify correctly the metres of these two passages. Most candidates secured one mark for homophonic (extract B).
4d	In this question candidates had to explain how harmony and tempo contributed to a battle-like atmosphere. Many candidates found this question difficult. Most-able candidates secured two marks for dissonant (harmony) and fast at end (tempo).
5a	Only most-able candidates were able to identify that this was an acoustic bass guitar.
5b	Most candidates recogised that this extract opened in a minor key.
5c	Most candidates secured at least one mark for syllabic or descending. Able-candidates secured three marks and there were a good range of correct responses including syncopated, descending and syllabic.
5d	The correct metre was identified by most candidates.
5e	In this question candidates had to identify harmonic features characteristic of jazz. Candidates responded well and many secured two marks. Common correct responses included chromatic, altered and dissonant.
6a	Many candidates were not able to identify the section played in the extract. Incorrect responses included section C, bridge and link.
6b	Many candidates secured at least one mark, often for homophony (texture). Many candidates secured two marks.
6c	Most candidates secured one mark for either ascending or trills. Only most-able candidates were able to identify further melodic features.
6d	Many candidates were able to identify the correct texture.
6e	In this question candidates had to identify features of the instrumental writing typical of early Romantic music. Many candidates found this question challenging. Correct responses often referred to a wide range, use of the sustain pedal or to sudden dynamic changes.
7a	Many candidates were able to identify the first three pitches. Few candidates secured five marks.
7b	Many candidates found rhythmic dictation harder than melodic dictation (7a). Many candidates were able to identify the two quavers at the start of the rhythm. Few candidates secured five marks.
8a	Most candidates were able to identify the use of triads or arpeggios in the accompaniment. More-able candidates were able to identify semiquavers.
8b	Most candidates recognised the sequence.
8c	Many candidates secured at least one mark, often for scalic or trill.
8d	Most candidates secured the one mark available for identifying that the repeat of the two bar melody was piano.
8e	Many candidates correctly identified the perfect cadence. However, far fewer candidates were able to identify the key.

| 9 | The final question on the paper (Section B) required candidates to evaluate how effectively Queen and Chicago use melody, tonality and harmony to capture differing atmospheres.

Less-able candidates were able to make relevant and accurate points about one, or both pieces, but did not make convincing evaluative comments. For example they were able to identify that both melodies were mostly syllabic but were not able to explain why this might be. Less-able candidates rarely provided supporting evidence and often described the use of other musical elements, for example use of forces, sonority and rhythm.

In general candidates provided more detail about melody and harmony than tonality. Many candidates were able to identify harmonic features used in both songs for example repeated chords and extended chords, and more-able candidates were able to demonstrate some stylistic awareness, commenting on stylistic features of glam rock and soft rock.

Most-able candidates organised their essay into coherent paragraphs, made perceptive observations about all three musical elements, and were able to make evaluative comments, for example *'Killer Queen opens in the key of C minor which is odd for a rock song because it isn't an easy key for guitar players'.* These candidates were also able to make direct comparisons between the songs, for example *'in both songs the lead vocalist sings in a high register: Freddie is showing off but in the other song the singer is using his high notes to plead.'*

Most-able candidates provided supporting evidence to amplify their musical argument, for example *'Queen uses added chords, like Bflat7 which is played by the honky-tonk in bar 4.'* They were also able to use an extensive range of relevant vocabulary, for example tessitura, falsetto, enharmonic and circle of fifths. |
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