

Report on the Components

June 2008

1919/MS/R/08

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

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

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Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications
PO Box 5050
Annesley
NOTTINGHAM
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 870 6622
Facsimile: 01223 552610
E-mail: publications@ocr.org.uk

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General Certificate of Secondary Education

Music (1919)

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Chief Examiner's Report

This examination year has been overshadowed by an administrative error which affected the listening paper. OCR deeply regrets the fact that such an error was made, although the impact on candidates' performance was far smaller than implied by national press reporting. The Principal Examiner's report provides detail of this and how the issues were dealt with, although it is appropriate that we all see things in the correct perspective. Having considered all the questions on the paper, the small number of questions affected by the error involved seven marks only. Those seven marks contributed to less than 2% of the total mark for the examination and therefore, after appropriate steps had been taken to deal with this, the impact on candidates' total marks was negligible.

It is hoped that all assessors will read the content of this year's report in detail, as it contains a number of points to be noted. There are a number of issues raised relating to the production and presentation of coursework that centres need to consider.

As we look towards new specifications, with teaching starting in 2009, there will be much stricter controls on how centre assessed work is produced and assessed. The term "coursework" will be replaced by the term "controlled assessment" and this will require a much greater degree of transparency as to when, where and how practical elements of the course are produced, and this may well require significant changes of practice. It would be good, therefore, if centres began the process of preparing for this in the coming year.

Principal Moderator's Report on Component 01

Administration

Moderators reported that most centres sent work on time, with just a few centres delaying the despatch of samples. Centres are reminded that the 15th May deadline (which is the same every year) enables samples to be selected and returned to moderators before the half term break so that the work can be undertaken within OCR's timescale. It is therefore important that all centres plan the completion of the practical elements of the course to meet this deadline. The Joint Council for Qualifications regulations now dictate that only in the most extreme circumstances, such as the long term illness of a candidate, will extensions to this deadline be given.

Moderators continue to be concerned about the time needed to check and correct administrative errors, with some centres needing corrections to more than ten errors, some of which, if not checked, would have disadvantaged their candidates considerably. Those centres who used the electronic assessment form, which adds up the marks automatically, presented no problems. However there were countless examples of simple arithmetical errors on handwritten forms, which had to be rectified before moderation could start. Centres are reminded therefore to check their computations before finalising their marks. Centres need also to check carefully that the MS1 form has been completed in triplicate, as precious time is lost in the despatch and return of amendment forms simply to confirm final marks. Moderators cannot check the correct transcription of marks onto the MS1 sheet if the moderator's copy is blank.

Moderators are able to complete this thorough check on all computations on the assessment forms because all such forms are sent before a sample is selected. Some centres still do not recognise this as standard practice in Music and have to be reminded to send the assessment forms, thus slowing down the process considerably.

A small number of centres forgot to enclose the CCS160 form, an important and vital document which verifies that the work is the candidate's own. One of these forms is required from each centre, covering all of the coursework submitted. If the form is not received by OCR, even after a reminder to the centre, then candidates' grades will not be issued. On a few occasions, despite the submission of the form, it transpired at moderation that work was not a candidate's own. Centres should not submit work which they cannot verify as being entirely that of the candidate. The number of centres whose candidates' work had to be dealt with as a matter of malpractice increased this year, and this is worrying. Sometimes this was a matter of an individual student plagiarising an existing piece, and sometimes there were groups of students writing exactly the same things in their appraisals, or even having compositions with identical materials. To preserve the integrity of the examination, teachers must take all necessary steps to ensure that students work independently of each other, and that what they submit is entirely their own unaided work.

A number of moderators reported that where additional contact with centres was needed there seemed to be little concern or urgency with their responses. Where centres had made arithmetical errors it often took many days (and sometimes weeks) to return a signed copy of the amendment form. This is a crucial and important document, which confirms that collaboration has taken place between Moderator and Assessor in arriving at a just and fair mark for the candidate. Failure to complete this task can only be detrimental to the integrity of the qualification.

Improvements in recording facilities in schools mean that the quality of recordings improves year on year. Most centres are now submitting their work on CD and this is helpful. A few centres

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failed to submit a track-list, or wrote the track titles on the CD itself, causing moderators to have difficulty in finding the work that needed to be sampled. Whilst moderators accept work being recorded in any order, it is most helpful to receive the Terminal Tasks together on a separate CD, as it is moderated as a separate component. When preparing sample materials, Centres should bear in mind that moderators listen to the work candidate by candidate in Component 1. The preferred order is: Performance 1; Composition 1; Performance 2; Composition 2.

A few assessors recorded lengthy announcements before every piece of work, and this is an unnecessary burden on the teacher and somewhat tedious for the moderator, having to listen to the centre number and name over and over again. Brief announcements, therefore, are requested.

Whilst OCR is still willing to accept cassette tapes, these must be in pristine condition and not old specimen which have been re-used multiple times. These are detrimental to the impression given of candidates' portfolios, as older tapes slip, jump and miss sections of pieces out. Centres that continue to use individual candidate tapes are reminded not to record performances on one side and compositions on the other (as was the practice before 2003) because this makes it difficult to hear the integrated elements of the coursework together.

Moderators were amazed to find whole sets of coursework sent in for examination which consisted of blank disks. It is paramount that all recordings are checked not only for quality but also for the fundamental issue of the recording being finalised on to the CD. Furthermore it is important to indicate to the Moderator which tracks are to be ignored.

OCR continues to be concerned about the small number of centres who, year on year, submit lost coursework forms. The occasional misplacement of a piece of work is not something that assessors should lose sleep over: moderators, who are generally practicing teachers, fully understand how this can happen. However when it happens to a large number of candidates' work, without any particular reason being given, it can reach a level where valid moderation is almost impossible.

Most centres now present each candidate's work in a plastic wallet or tie tagged together and this makes the paperwork easy to handle. There are a few centres who still invest in high quality heavy folders which are bulky to handle and expensive to post. This is unnecessary and does not make the job any easier.

Finally the Candidate Information Forms are an integral part of the process. They should be completed by the candidate and sent with the sample. These forms are a useful cross check that the requirements of Area of Study 1 have been fully met, and that the candidate has composed their second composition to a clear brief. They can be very helpful to moderators in arriving at a decision about the quality and mark awarded for compositions but in many cases these were sparsely and poorly completed and some were submitted blank.

Quality of Work

Performing

Moderators reported a good cross section of performances being submitted. Mention should be made of some of the increasing number of rock and jazz players who are serious candidates and bring the bravura and excitement of their respective genres to their performances: it is this special character and pizzazz in some performances that both surprised and delighted moderators.

Moderators also noted a further shift away from the classical repertoire in favour of contemporary pop, jazz, blues, rock, and, particularly musical theatre. It is no accident that this final category has grown, given the public interest in the genre through television talent shows, which showcase a wide range of pieces.

There were many fine performances where candidates had clearly spent time and effort perfecting the quality of their work. This included much more attention being paid to the concept of interpretation rather than simply the accuracy of the notes on the page and this reflects the positive impact of Area of Study 1. The employment of subtle dynamics, crisp and articulate phrasing and secure intonation were highlights of some of the excellent performances heard this session.

There were a few occasions where candidates were disadvantaged by performing pieces which were unsuitable. Candidates need to be reminded to choose their repertoire carefully so as to showcase their talent and not overstretch their means by presenting a performance that is too taxing, or at the other end of the scale, too elementary. It is in this respect that the Assessor's input is so important in gauging the correct submission that will acquire the most marks for the candidate.

The GCSE criteria require candidates to demonstrate their ability to perform individually and in ensemble. This has always been the case. The reduction in 2007 from three to two performances has not changed this. OCR has always been flexible in its interpretation of the word "solo", allowing performances where the candidate plays a significant part in a group, taking the lead at times, to be counted in this category. For an ensemble performance however, the candidate needs to be interacting with another performer live, and the criteria for assessment can only be applied if this is so. A small minority of centres submitted two solo performances for some of their candidates, and this meant that one performance had to be disallowed. Performances where two candidates sing a verse each, accompanied by a backing, cannot, for obvious reasons, be classed as an ensemble, and performances where the parts divide or overlap just for a few notes, will only gain very limited credit.

Finally as part of the requirements of Area of Study 1, centres are reminded that candidates cannot perform their own compositions as Performance 1. The performance must be of a piece composed by someone else, of high enough quality to inform their study. Candidates are free to perform their own compositions as Performance 2 and many benefited from doing this.

Composing

Moderators were encouraged by the skill employed by candidates in creating the most interesting and original work for their Integrated Coursework submission. In many cases this not only contained elements of style and nuance that linked clearly to their performance but also employed originality and freshness in their work which serves to underline the strength of this part of the examination.

Centres are reminded that pieces which do not feature the instrument studied are not allowed as Composition 1. A few candidates were significantly disadvantaged this year because they did

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not meet the specification requirement in this basic respect, and indeed seemed to have completely missed the point of the Area of Study.

The quality of the submissions for Composition 2 varied tremendously. Whilst there were some excellent Disco & Minimalist pieces, equally there were some poor examples. Good use of technology was evident in the best of these compositions, but some centres claimed pieces were Minimalist when they lacked even the basic features required. The meeting of criteria for Area of Study 3 and 4 continued to be disappointing. In many cases, candidates were accessing one major style feature to support their composition in the hope that this justified its title. There are more features in a waltz than an 'um cha cha' accompaniment. Further to this, some candidates abandoned the important element of melody in salsa to focus on rhythmic input alone.

Waltzes were the most popular stylistic option but examples of good composition in this style were rare because often candidates had composed to a formula and this restrained individual originality. A few centres used computer programmes to support the generation of these pieces, and this provided little opportunity for candidates to develop their own creative input.

The least successful compositions were those that were presented only in written form. In many such cases it was clear that the centre had adopted some composing formula. It is important the candidates can hear what they are composing throughout the process.

Some candidates submitted work that had no connection to the Areas of Study, such as Jigs or Heavy Rock pieces. These pieces had to be discounted.

Of greatest concern was the number of compositions which did not provide clear evidence of what the candidate had done. Such compositions included pieces which were performed by a group, or pieces which were generated with the support of computer software. Some evidence discovered in the appraisals showed that assessors were enhancing composition work beyond the intentions of the composer and, where this was clearly seen, it had to be treated as malpractice. Candidates need to be taught how to communicate their work, and this is part of their assessment.

There was a small minority of joint compositions submitted this year. These can disadvantage candidates where the individual contribution cannot be identified. Centres are reminded that joint composition work is not appropriate to Composition 1.

Appraising

The standard of presentation of the appraisals improves from year to year. However there was clear evidence this year that in a number of centres the process was teacher led. Candidates with identical formats and even identical sentences demonstrated that teachers have been exceeding their brief in assisting coursework and, in a small number of cases, the work was so clearly the same from candidate to candidate that it had to be treated as malpractice.

Candidates, on the whole, find the concept of self-evaluation very difficult at this level. Moderators can tell only too clearly when this has been handled well in school. The tackling of this issue should remain and important an integral part of every music course and should be practised regularly throughout KS3 and KS4.

Whilst there were many perceptive and detailed appraisals presented, it was disappointing to notice that a lot of the more able candidates did not incorporate sufficient detail in their appraisals to do themselves justice. Conversely moderators were delighted to find candidates who had a real passion for the genre in which they were performing and had really benefited in their understanding by the study that they had undertaken. These candidates were often, but not exclusively, those who performed in more popular genres.

Performance Appraisal

This section has three strands and most candidates showed understanding of this. The most common failing was the lack of reference to performing techniques and, on some occasions, candidates made no reference to their instrument at all. Project type work, with pages of background information (sometimes downloaded from Internet Websites) which bore little relevance to the specification requirements, was still occasionally seen although thankfully such practice is on the decrease.

Composition Brief

Again candidates often did not take into sufficient account the instrument they were writing for and many composition briefs merely listed structural and elemental features (e.g. ternary form, 4/4 time signature) which, whilst appropriate starting points, did not give any indication of how the resource was going to be exploited. Some briefs were clearly written retrospectively, which is not within the spirit of the examination.

Many Composition Briefs consisted of nothing more than a recipe for a composition which offered no explanation for why the composer had selected the ingredients on the page.

Composition Appraisal

It was relatively rare to find an appraisal that focused specifically on an evaluation of the composition; more often paper was wasted on repetition of the brief, or descriptions of the composition process. Some candidates were caught out when they wrote things that indicated that help had been given with the composition, and that help had not been declared on the assessment form, or accounted for in the assessment.

Quality of Assessment

Performing

Most performances were assessed accurately. Where this was not the case, it was usually in the upper range where assessors had awarded full marks for performances which had several errors and blemishes. Centres are reminded that the top band of marks is reserved for performances which are fully fluent and accurate and are communicated with expression and interpretation. That is not to say that the occasional mishap cannot be forgiven, but where there are several noticeable errors or technical shortcomings this band should not be used. Many assessors seemed reluctant to use the 7-8 band for the many good performances which had such shortcomings.

Difficulty marks were also occasionally too generously applied especially in genres where the technical demand is not that high. Centres are reminded that keyboard performances at a basic level should use two hands, and candidates that play very simple pieces with only one hand will need appropriate mark adjustment to compensate for this. It appeared that some assessors are not referring to the guidance in the specification when applying difficulty marks.

Although comments on the assessment form are not mandatory, some assessors left the moderator guessing as to what part the candidate was playing. Where the part is not evident from the recording, a score should be sent. Similarly the use of presets and auto functions needs to be made fully explicit either on the assessment form or the technology form provided specifically for this purpose.

Composing

The general tendency of marking compositions too generously continues to be a major factor in causing mark adjustments. Assessors, in some cases, saw any complete attempt at a composition as an achievement and awarded marks profusely. There needs to be more thought, consideration and care before the assessment of compositions, particularly in fairly observing the connections between performance and composition for Area of Study 1.

The awarding of area of study marks for Composition 2 was particularly generous. The majority of Waltz submissions which contained an um cha cha accompaniment and had evenly constructed phrases, warranted an area of study mark of 2. However many of these were awarded marks of 4 or even 5. To gain such marks, a waltz would need elements such as characteristic waltz rhythms, appropriate ornamentation, rubato and textural changes within a well conceived structure, maybe with an introduction.

Many Minimalist compositions too only used very basic features of the style (such as repetition and layering) and therefore again did not justify more than one or two marks for the area of study criteria. Such pieces were often wrongly awarded full marks against the area of study criteria.

Appraising

It is this area of assessment that can provide the most difficulties, as assessors award marks with less confidence. Very often too many marks were awarded for too little detail whilst on the other hand there were occasions where marks seemed to be related to the quantity rather than the quality of writing.

Whilst at the upper end of the scale there was a clear tendency to be over generous with marks, there were a number of assessors who were unduly harsh on the weaker candidates. Some appraisals, where candidates had made faltering attempts, were awarded 0, whereas 0 is not an accessible mark in the mark scheme. It should only be awarded if there is no work submitted. The 1-2 band is reserved for candidates who make very simple statements which contain only a little relevant thought, and often this band was used for work that merited 3 marks.

To gain marks in the 6-8 band and above, the appraisal needs to do more than list features but make some assessment of the reason for the features. There were a number of performance appraisals which were significantly over marked because they listed features of each piece without comparing them and drawing from those comparisons the reasons why they are the same or different.

Principal Moderator's Report on Terminal Task 02

Quality of work

The response to the Terminal Task stimulus was encouraging with a better response overall. The most successful responses were performed by candidates, although there were some very able candidates who provided highly stylish and accurately presented written versions.

For less talented candidates, the act of writing a terminal task can become an unmusical formula driven exercise. As with any composition work, it is essential that candidates hear their work and without this the exercise can be of little value. In such cases, the outcome demonstrated very limited achievement against the assessment criteria.

It needs to be reiterated that the stimulus must be used as the basis of the composition. This is to ensure that the task is a genuine "unseen" activity and not one which enables candidates to present something which they prepared earlier. On one or two occasions it was noted that the candidate started off by playing the stimulus then continued to compose music totally unrelated to it. This is not acceptable practice. There was also evidence that some candidates had come into the examination with a melodic shape in mind and applied it to the given rhythm, whatever that happened to be. This too is not in the spirit of the examination, and is not enabling candidates to show what they can do. The practice could also catch candidates out if the given rhythm is not amenable to the melodic idea that has been pre-prepared.

The Terminal Task is linked to learning within Area of Study 2 (Techniques of Melodic Composition) and as such it is a melodic response that is sought. Moderators reported fewer examples of drummers using the rhythm on drum kit this year, but they still existed.

Assessment of Terminal Task

Moderators found that in most cases the marks for the terminal task needed small reductions.

The marks awarded for communicating were often generous, especially where the task was presented in written format. To gain more than 2 marks there must be more than just accurate pitches and rhythms presented. To gain the full 5 marks, a written version needs to show attention to articulation, dynamics, tempo and instrumental timbre, in a musical way. Moderators could not justify full marks for presentations where dynamics were sprinkled over the music randomly, or where contradictory marks of articulation (such as the word *legato* printed under a phrase marked *staccato*) had been added more to impress than because of musical thinking.

Principal Examiner's Report on Component 03

General Comments

The paper this year suffered from an unfortunate administrative error where copyright acknowledgements were included on the back of the paper. Obviously this had the potential to reveal some of the answers and OCR took the matter extremely seriously, with steps being taken to ensure that no candidate was advantaged or disadvantaged. Having considered all the questions on the paper, the small number of questions affected by the error involved seven marks only. Although noted by examiners, these were not included in the marking of the paper. This resulted in an effective total mark of 93, to which an additional seven marks were then added to every candidate's score, bringing the overall total back to 100 marks.

However, it was evident from the marking of the paper that very few candidates were aware of the information on the back and only a small minority of the candidates gained any advantage from this. Out of the 12,303 candidates that sat this examination, less than 7.5% got all seven questions correct. Many of these did not appear to have used the copyright information in order to do so, having given alternative correct answers to some of the questions.

The paper was of a similar standard to that in previous years and once again there was a good spread of marks. The highest mark was 98 and it was encouraging to note that there was an increase in the number of high quality responses.

Once again this year there was evidence of good teaching from some centres, with candidates showing a thorough understanding across all of the Areas of Study. These centres had dealt with each genre in detail and it was clear that teachers had a good understanding of the content of the specification. Many centres have also become accustomed to the style of this listening paper and have drawn on past papers and their answer schemes to prepare candidates for the examination. Conversely, there was some evidence of centres not preparing their candidates well at all. This was revealed by many inaccurate, unfocussed and vague answers across all of the Areas of Study.

It should also be noted that some candidates did not always direct their answers to the specific extract but rather at the general style or musical history period. Candidates sometimes wrote about what they expected to hear not what they actually heard.

Although good answers were seen to all questions, those which used specific music terminology were not answered so well. Candidates often muddled terms like *tempo* and *dynamics* and the term *articulation* was not understood by many candidates at all. Centres should be aware of the terms that appear in the language for learning of the specification.

Centres should direct their candidates to look at the total mark awarded for each part-question. In several cases candidates only gave one answer where two marks were available. It is normal examination procedure to allocate one mark to each single point given in an answer; therefore, if a candidate gives only one answer where two marks are available they will not be able to access both of the marks. This rationale should be taught as part of candidates' examination technique.

It is important for centres to note that they should seek permission from OCR to allow a candidate to use a word processor, have an amanuensis or have extra time. A copy of the letter or form giving permission should be attached to the script which is then sent to the examiner. A number of centres this year used the JCQ/AA Form 1 but did not send any official notification of permission and on further investigation it was found that several of these centres had not sought official permission at all.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

This question saw mixed responses with the usual mistakes made in the recognition of a Pavan which many candidates mistook for a Galliard.

Extract A

- i) Although this was one of the seven questions not marked most candidates answered correctly.
- ii) Nearly all candidates identified that there were *four* beats in a bar.
- iii) Many candidates correctly wrote *Clave* although there were a few who used words such as *syncopated* which were too vague and did not answer the question specifically enough but which was one of the possible answers required for the answer to part (v). A number of candidates wrote *son* which was not enough to gain credit.
- iv) Many high and middle ability candidates scored full marks here because they were able to explain what they heard in detail; a significant number of lower ability candidates scored one for *call and response*.
- v) There were some rather vague answers here with badly worded descriptions that did not use relevant musical language. Some candidates repeated their answer to (iii), which gained no marks. Other candidates, however, were able to use words such as *syncopated*, *cross rhythms* and the more obvious word *repetition* in order to gain marks.

Extract B

- i) The vast majority of candidates recognised correctly that lines 1, 2 and 4 were the same.
- ii) A good proportion of candidates wrote *pentatonic* here although the incorrect answers of major and minor were also seen.
- iii) Again many identified *British Folk*, with Plainsong being the most popular incorrect choice made.
- iv) Although there have been questions like this in previous papers, most candidates did not understand what this question was looking for. Candidates gave answers such as *female* and *solo*, which did not show the 'style of singing'. Answers such as *legato*, *sustained*, use of *vibrato* and *ornaments* were what were required here.
- v) Most candidates gained a mark for *guitar*.

Extract C

- i) This was the second of the seven questions that were not marked. Many candidates correctly wrote *Pavan* but there were a significant number of Galliards and even Waltzes, which have three beats in a bar and not two.
- ii) There were mixed responses for this question with many candidates incorrectly offering 'ballrooms', even when they had correctly identified Pavan in part (i). There were also a number of 'courtyards' and 'courthouses', which were also incorrect.
- iii) Few candidates correctly identified both instruments precisely. A good proportion gained a mark for *cymbal* and then wrote *drum* rather than the accurate response of *Tabor*.
- iv) Candidates who had not identified (i) correctly wrote mistaken answers here referring to *um cha cha* rhythms, fast speed and triple time. Those who recognised that the extract was a Pavan fared rather better and generally gained at least two marks. The most popular answers were *slow*, *stately*, *duple time*, with more able candidates recognising the repetitive and typical *minim*, *crotchet*, *crotchet* rhythm, *repeated section* and specific instruments such as *crumhorns*.

Question 2

This question produced answers which, as one would expect, appeared to relate directly to ability.

- a) This was the third of the seven questions that were not marked. Most candidates answered this correctly.
- b) A large number of candidates recognised that an *orchestra* accompanied the solo instrument but there were those who answered incorrectly, choosing either consort or string quartet.
- c) A good proportion of candidates gained a mark for 6/8 but some did not hear the compound rhythms and so answered 2/4 or 4/4.
- d) Most middle ability candidates and some lower ability candidates gained a mark for *higher* and those of high ability and some of middle ability heard that the melody was an *octave higher* and so scored full marks.
- e) Very few of the answers to this question gained full marks. Many answers were vague and did not answer the question, which asked specifically for techniques used to extend the melody. A common incorrect answer was that there were more instruments. High ability candidates were able to identify correctly a *sequence (ascending)*, and they were also able to describe the use of *repeated phrases* while less able candidates recognised that there was *repetition* and so gained 1 mark out of the 4 available. Once again there was a significant minority of candidates who wrote sequencing, a technology term, instead of *sequence*, the musical device.
- f) Some candidates clearly understood the role of the timpani in Classical music and correctly identified *Tonic and Dominant or 'A' and 'D'*, whilst many guessed at letter names incorrectly.
- g) The first part of this question was the fourth of the seven questions that were not marked, however most candidates recognised that this extract was from the *Classical* period. As in previous years, giving reasons as to why this extract was Classical was not well answered. With questions like this appearing every year, it is surprising that after six years of the specification better answers are not being seen. However, marks were gained for *balanced phrases* and use of *crescendos and diminuendos*, with some candidates recognising the *simple harmony* and use of the *clarinet*. Many candidates gave negative or comparative answers such as 'there was no harpsichord', which have never been accepted. Candidates appear to find it difficult to describe the size of the orchestra for this type of question. Over the years it has become accepted that the size of the Baroque orchestra is small, the Classical orchestra is medium and the Romantic orchestra is large. It would be beneficial for candidates if centres were to reinforce this general distinction.

Question 3

This question was not answered as well as in previous years, mainly because of the notation in part (a).

- a) This question gained very few full marks this year. A good number of high ability candidates managed to score 7 out of 8, losing one mark because they wrote the 'A' in bar 15 an octave too high. Most marks that were given were gained for shape and not accuracy of pitch and many candidates only scored only 1, 2 or 3 out of the possible 8.
- b) (i) Many candidates correctly identified *three* instruments playing, although some heard only two.
(ii) Few candidates heard that the instrument playing the melody was a *recorder*, most giving the answer flute, which was incorrect. Baroque or wooden flute were also given at times as a correct answer.
- c) (i) and (ii) Although not as many as in previous years, a substantial number of candidates still left out questions where they were required to circle or mark notes on the score. The identification of a 6th was really a visual question which candidates of all abilities should have been able to access easily and of those who answered this question a good proportion saw the 6th in bar 2. Some candidates clearly did not understand what was required of them and

- drew circles around just one note or around too many notes. The trill was quite well answered but common errors were to circle the second beat of bar 5 or the first beat of bar 6.
- d) A large proportion of candidates were able to hear that the extract started in a major key and finished in a minor key so were able to tick the correct box. The most common error was that it went back to the tonic.
- e) (i) Like (c)(i) this was a visual question which was designed to prepare candidates to answer part (ii). Unfortunately some referred only to rhythm for their answer and so gained no marks. However a good number identified that the shape had *descending sequences* and that the melody had *leaps*, with the more able providing specific information defining the precise intervals.
(ii) This was generally not very well answered with some candidates repeating their answer to part (i) and others leaving it blank. However, most candidates who gained marks identified that there were *added notes* in the form of *scales*, or *ornaments*.
- f) (i) This was the fifth of the questions that were not marked. The fact that the most popular answer given was *Bach*, showed quite clearly that candidates had not used the information given on the back. Most candidates correctly opted for a Baroque composer.
(ii) This question directed candidates to the features of the accompaniment and a great many candidates were able to identify correctly the *harpsichord* but were not able to go on to gain full marks by linking it with its role in *playing chords* as a *continuo instrument*. Some candidates did not refer specifically to the accompaniment and wrote about general Baroque features.

Question 4

Candidates answered the questions requiring single word answers, the technology question and the tempo question well. The questions requiring more detailed answers were not answered so well by some candidates.

- a) The majority of candidates correctly answered this question with the most popular incorrect answer being serialism, which is one of the starting points from AoS 2, not part of AoS 4.
- b) Many low ability candidates simply repeated the names of the instruments given in the questions or wrote 'repetition' which gave no detail and so gained no marks in any of the boxes. Middle and high ability candidates were able to write with more specific detail and so gained more marks.
- High instruments** – This was the box that was answered least well. Candidates gained marks mostly from hearing that the music had *staccato* notes that were *random* in nature.
- Middle range instruments** – A large number of candidates recognised that there was a *repeated pattern* and some identified it as a *two note pattern*. Other candidates were able to identify that this group of instruments *entered first* and that they played *all the way through*.
- Low instruments** – Answers here were gained mainly for hearing that these instruments *kept the beat* and played *staccato/short* notes. A number of candidates incorrectly heard the bass line as a drone.
- c) This was the sixth of the seven questions that were not marked. The majority of answers here were minimalist composers although there were far more that gave Steve Reich than Philip Glass, which was the answer that could have been gleaned from the copyright information.
- d) With a number of correct choices here, the majority of candidates gained a mark, with the most popular answer being *flute*.
- e) As in previous years this question was answered very well. Candidates appear to have learnt the expected answers and very many candidates scored the full 3 marks. Some candidates who only scored 2 did so because they repeated *synthesiser* or *keyboard* that they had given as their answer to part (d).
- f) This question was generally badly answered with many candidates having no idea what the term *articulation* meant. Answers about *tempo*, *dynamics* or *instruments* were common with other candidates leaving the answer blank. Those candidates who did understand the term were able to gain two marks by saying that Extract 4B was *smoother* than Extract 4A.

- g) Candidates of all abilities were able to recognise that Extract 4A was *faster* than Extract 4B and so gained two marks.
- h) *Phase shifting* and its explanation was the answer that was required here. Clearly some centres had taught this well and candidates were able to give clear descriptions of this process. However, there were candidates who did not seem to have been taught about this and so they gave very poor answers relating to multi-tracking and repetition which were not appropriate and gained no marks.
- i) Most candidates gained at least one mark here, the most popular correct answer being *Gamelan*. Some candidates only underlined one answer, although this did not happen very often; clearly centres have learned from the experience of previous years. The most common incorrect answers were plainsong and British Folk.

Question 5

This question was answered well by able candidates and there were parts of this question that were answered well by middle ability candidates. However a number of less able candidates did not score at all well on this question despite its straight-forward nature.

- a) Many candidates scored one mark here for answers such as *having time to prepare to dance*, but few candidates scored the full two marks. There were two marks for this question and many candidates did not give two reasons thus not allowing themselves the possibility of gaining both marks.
- b) In previous years candidates have often been asked to give features of the waltz style and candidates have correctly identified the *um cha cha* rhythm or accompaniment. However this year, candidates were asked to listen to the accompaniment and it was surprising that so many failed to recognise this feature and instead gave vague answers relating to instruments and dynamics and so did not gain any marks. Some candidates were able to identify the *um cha cha* nature of the accompaniment and so scored one mark but they did not then go on to give any other information to enable access to the full two marks. Those who did gain two marks went on to mention the use of *simple harmony*, and the names of the instruments playing the um and the cha cha.
- c) Some candidates were not specific enough with their answers here, many stating that A1 was higher than A. It was only the melody that was higher and therefore general statements about the music being at a higher pitch were not accurate enough to gain any marks. Able candidates gained marks for saying that the *melody was an octave higher* and many were able to hear that a *flute* was added and that it *decorated* the melody.
- d) A significant minority of candidates did not appear to know what percussion instruments were. A number of candidates wrote about string and brass instruments and so gained no marks. Those who understood the question mostly gained at least two marks for identifying the instruments correctly and a good proportion of them were able to describe what at least one of the instruments played.
- e) This was answered well by most candidates.
- f) A great many candidates mistakenly thought that the music got faster and so they gained no marks. These candidates appeared to have confused tempo with dynamics. This extract remained at one *steady* speed and was *fast*. Once again candidates often gained one mark but did not add enough information to gain two marks.

Question 6

In previous years question 6 has been a question that has been answered well by candidates of all abilities. This was not the case this year and very few candidates gained full marks.

- a) This was the seventh of the questions that were not marked. The most popular answer here was tabla and not the correct *dohl* which is the standard percussion instrument used in Bhangra.
- b) Because many candidates answered **(a)** incorrectly, they went on to describe the way that tabla drums are played i.e. two drums played with the hands. However, it was also clear that a great many candidates who answered **(a)** correctly did not know how a dohl drum is played and again wrote that it was played with the hands. Some candidates did gain marks for knowing that the dohl is played with *sticks, one larger than the other*.
- c) A good percentage of the candidates knew that the underlying rhythm pattern for a Bhangra song is the *Chaal* rhythm.
- d) Most candidates gained two marks here, the most popular answers being *multi-tracking, looping* and *synthesiser*.
- e) The answers to this question were very mixed with a fairly even split between either of the wrong answers and the correct one.
- f) This question was not as well answered as might have been anticipated. A number of candidates wrote what they expected to hear rather than what they actually heard. Many candidates therefore wrote 'hoi' which, although common in many Bhangra pieces, did not feature in this extract. However, marks were gained for features such as *shouting, narrow range* and use of *decoration*.

Grade Thresholds

General Certificate of Secondary Education
Music (Specification Code 1919)
June 2008 Examination Series

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
01	180	-	140	121	102	88	74	60	46
02	45	-	12	10	8	6	5	4	3
03	100	-	69	58	47	40	33	27	21

Specification Options

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	300	248	219	190	161	138	115	92	69
Percentage in Grade		11.8	19.3	21.1	20.8	11.4	7.5	4.4	2.4
Cumulative Percentage in Grade		11.8	31.1	52.2	73.0	84.4	91.9	96.3	98.7

The total entry for the examination was 12,303

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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

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