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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

MUSIC

GCE Ordinary Level

<p>Paper 6020/01</p>

<p>Listening</p>

General comments

There were strong performances from many candidates this year, and very few consistently weak answers. It was again pleasing to see well-expressed and detailed responses in all sections of the paper. Where there was weakness in Unprepared Listening this was frequently balanced by strength in Prepared Listening, and vice versa. The wide range of marks across all ability levels showed that effective differentiation had been achieved.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Candidates found this question a little more taxing overall than in previous years, and very few achieved the highest marks available. Chord IIb proved particularly difficult to identify, and many candidates were unfamiliar with the notation of bars 3 and 4. Part **(c)** required the correct placing of *two* related dynamic markings, and this was not always noted by candidates.

Question 2

The response to this question was pleasing in the level of detail observed. Although the score extract was not easy to follow at first listening, the response was notably more assured than had been the case in previous years. Where marks were lost, it was often due to the imprecise detail of location of the differences, rather than the description of the differences themselves. A surprising number of candidates misidentified the mordent as a trill or turn.

Question 3

Some candidates may have been surprised to find two twentieth-century extracts here, and this perhaps led many to suggest "Romantic" in **(c)(ii)** despite the aural evidence to the contrary. There was clear familiarity with the style of extract **3 (b)**. In part **(iii)** of both **3 (a)** and **3 (c)** candidates were not always able to comment perceptively on what was actually heard. **3 (a)(iii)** attracted many incorrect responses of "terraced dynamics" and "single mood", rather than considering the musical evidence of the performance. In **3 (c)(iii)**, comments such as "atonal", "harsh dissonance" and "frequent change of metre" were incorrect and inappropriate to the Neo-Classical style of the extract.

Question 4

Most candidates demonstrated a secure knowledge of Music around the World. There were many detailed answers to the questions requiring descriptions of the music, which revealed careful and perceptive listening. Again it is important not to rely too heavily on generalised terms such as "call and response" (**(a)(iii)**) and "improvised" (**(b)(iii)** and **(c)(ii)**), which do not fully convey the content of these extracts.

Question 5

The Examiners were surprised that “ground bass” was not recognised as the form required for part **(ii)** of **5 (a)** but, happily, many candidates went on to detail the use of the ground bass in parts **(iii)** and **(iv)**, and so were able to gain the appropriate credit there. Answers to part **(vi)** were very effective and often well-justified.

A large number of candidates ignored the clear ternary structure of the second movement of Prokofiev’s *Classical Symphony* in favour of “rondo”. Candidates showed little knowledge of the brass instruments used in this score, and were unable to comment with accuracy on their appearance in the recorded extract.

Question 6

The background to Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* was generally well-known, though candidates tended to quote Aeneas’s destination as Troy, rather than Rome.

In parts **(e)** to **(g)** it was rewarding to see good awareness of the important detail of Prokofiev’s style in this piece.

“Essay” questions attracted some very extensive and detailed responses, though full marks were also obtained by numerous shorter but well-focused answers. It was particularly pleasing to see that candidates had often planned their answers carefully, and had applied their knowledge to the specific question, answering with the appropriate emphasis. Where the higher mark-levels were not achieved, this was most often due to the omission of part of the answer to what are, in effect, multi-part questions. Responses on Purcell often neglected to include the required detail of one musical item, and those on Prokofiev were not always clear on the chronology of relevant works.

<p>Paper 6020/02 Melody, Harmony and Analysis</p>

General comments

The standard of performance by candidates this year was very similar to that of the previous session. As usual, **Question 3** proved to be the strongest area of performance for most candidates, with most scripts receiving marks between 18 and the maximum 25. Additionally (and following the pattern of previous years) the weakest section was melody writing (**Question 1**). In this part of the paper candidates need to appreciate that the line they write must make sense as *sound*: mere adherence to a structural plan that produces an awkward melodic line is not advised. The best answers suggested that candidates were able to “hear” what they had written mentally, and this facility is important if candidates wish to produce melodies that will gain access to the highest mark bands for this question.

Once again Examiners were disappointed by the significant number of scripts that displayed major errors of musical literacy. The most common mistakes included the writing of a time signature at the start of every line of music, and an incorrect number of beats in some bars of the music. These are basic notation slips, and Examiners wish to remind candidates of the need to check their answers carefully before papers are handed in.

Comments on specific questions**Question 1****(a)** *Melody writing*

MOZART, *Clarinet quintet, K.581*, 1st movement, bars 1-2 (Violin 1)

Examiners commented on a significant increase in the number of candidates who chose to write for the violin this session, and in general most violin melodies displayed some sense of idiom. Examiners noted that the same was not true of most melodies written for flute. Many of these tended to stay in a low register where the sound of the instrument would be dark and not particularly effective in relation to what had been written.

The most successful answers tended to set the melody in A major, but many of those who chose to compose a melody based in D major experienced difficulty in turning the line effectively from the dominant implication of the given pitches towards the tonic. A number of melodies modulated (with varying degrees of success) to a minor key (usually the relative minor), but in general the harmonic implications of the melodic line were less clear in minor-key sections, and many workings failed to deal effectively with the awkward augmented interval between the sixth and seventh degrees of the minor scale. In some cases an effective modulation was followed by a far less convincing return to the tonic key. In contrast, some of the best answers to this question exhibited a strong sense of musical style, with effectively-shaped lines, detailed articulation and a convincing sense of idiom. Examiners commented on particularly effective examples written in the styles of a minuet, gavotte and elegy.

Examiners wish to remind candidates that the melody composed should make use of the given pitches and use these as the basis for construction of an *original* melody. This should not be based strongly on melodic ideas that are already well known. Examiners noted with concern that particular examples this session “borrowed” significant amounts of melodic material from Grieg’s *Morning (Peer Gynt)*, and from Bizet’s *L’Arlésienne*.

Additional points noted by Examiners include:

- Melodies that were constructed to a carefully worked out prepared plan. These designs usually involved the use of complex melodic devices such as retrograde and inversion, but they frequently produced lines that did not make convincing aural sense as melodies. The overriding consideration must be the musical sense of the line rather than the analytical intricacies of the structure.
- Overuse of rhythmic and/or melodic patterns. A narrow range of dotted rhythm patterns and ascending/descending scales were the most notable features that detracted from the overall effectiveness of candidates’ melodic lines. A number of melodies contained little more than basic repetitions of a fairly simple rhythmic pattern, and some even made use of a repeated pitch pattern than was moved up or down to other pitches. Successful melodies must show some evidence of an ability to build upon initial motifs by extending and linking melodic ideas.
- Inconsistent placing of dynamic and articulation markings. Common mistakes included failure to note cessation of *rall* or *pizz.* markings and *crescendo* and *diminuendo* markings that had no appropriate dynamic level at the end of them. Examiners were disappointed that so many candidates had not given this important part of their writing the attention it deserved.

(b) *Word setting*

LANGSTON HUGHES, *Delinquent*, lines 1-4 and 9-12

Only a small number of candidates selected this option and Examiners saw very few good answers. The best workings tended to use images of the text in a dramatic way, especially in setting the words “tiger” and “owl”. However, most candidates offered syllable-by-syllable settings of the given text, with many answers failing to appreciate the correct rhythmic stresses of the poem. In addition, many melodies failed to include appropriate tempo and dynamic indications.

Several melodies were written for alto voice but ventured into note ranges well beyond the upper limit of an alto voice (for example, using leger lines above the treble clef).

Question 2

Harmonisation

MENDELSSOHN, *Organ sonata no.4 in B-flat*, 2nd movement, bars 0³-10²

- (a) Most candidates were able to produce appropriate bass lines, although many moved exclusively in crotchets and only a few attempted to provide a level of independent interest by using passing and/or auxiliary notes. Examiners were disappointed that so many candidates wrote an opening bass note that produced consecutive 5th between soprano and bass lines in the dovetail with the printed music.
- (b) Several workings contained chord indications that included awkward placing of second-inversion chords, although many candidates who received marks in the upper mark bands were able to display security in handling some complex harmonic patterns, including the using of passing 6/4 and V⁷d-Ib progressions.

In contrast, a significant number of scripts failed to include any bass note or chord indication for the first note of bar 4, and some workings contained bass lines that did not consistently agree with the chord indications provided beneath the staff.

- (c) Many melody lines were uninteresting and consisted of nothing more than minims. Several answers also contained awkward leaps, especially at the final cadence, while some workings produced very large gaps between the alto and soprano voices. The best answers attempted to provide some melodic interest as a result of passing and/or auxiliary notes, but Examiners were disappointed that many answers appeared to exhibit little concern for the musical character of the added melodic line.

Question 3

Analysis

MATTHEW CAMIDGE, *Concerto in g, Gavotte*, (organ solo) bars 0⁴-24³

As in previous sessions this question was well answered by most candidates, and many scripts received maximum or near-maximum marks for the question.

In section (a) most candidates were able to identify chords and inversions accurately. Some candidates failed to perceive the use of a first inversion of the tonic chord at bar 6³, and many found the chord at 7³ a problem (Examiners credited references to chord IIb or IV⁷). Curiously a number of candidates failed to identify the chord at bar 3³ as a tonic chord. An ability to “hear” the music mentally would have made it clear that the underpinning harmony in the bar was a tonic chord, and that the melodic C in the right hand was not part of the harmony.

In section (b) most candidates identified the harmonic function of the note C (bar 4) accurately as a passing note, and in section (c) the note marked X as an appoggiatura. Unexpectedly, many candidates who answered both of these sections with complete accuracy failed to describe the note Y (section (g)) as an upper auxiliary note. Careful study of the alternative answers available in this multiple-choice question would have made it clear that the description “auxiliary note” was the only option that could be applied to the note in its particular harmonic context.

Most candidates identified the key and relationship accurately in section (e), although some careless answers gave “B-flat major” (correct) as the key followed by “relative *minor*” (incorrect) as the relationship.

Examiners were perplexed to discover that a significant number of candidates who achieved maximum marks for identifying chords in a “mechanical” manner in section (a) were unable to display a similar level of harmonic perception in identifying cadences in section (f). A number of scripts described the cadence at bars 15/16 as plagal rather than perfect.

Once again many candidates were unable to focus on aspects of *harmony* in section (h) and wrote about irrelevant melodic lines and/or piano figuration. Relatively few candidates were able to show that they had perceived features such as the use of a dominant pedal in both sections, or the mirroring of initial Vb-I progressions in each section of the piece.

Examiners were extremely disappointed that a number of able candidates failed to answer any of the questions printed on page 8 of the examination paper. The bottom right-hand corner of page 7 contains the clear instruction "Turn over" and by ignoring this candidates denied themselves a possibility of 4 marks on this question.

<p>Paper 6020/03 Performing</p>

General comments

The syllabus requirements were generally well understood by Centres and the standard of assessment was mostly satisfactory.

A wide range of music from different traditions was presented and most candidates had prepared well for their examination and were ably accompanied where appropriate. Some candidates presented pieces which were, for the moment, beyond their technical competence. It is preferable for such candidates to offer music that is slightly easier so that they can demonstrate their musical skills rather than their musical inadequacies.

In some cases the programmes were short and did not conform to the syllabus requirements, *that performance time should not be less than five minutes*. While length has no merit in itself, candidates should be given a full opportunity to show the range of skills of which they are truly capable and which will thus enable them to access the highest mark bands.

Centres are reminded that, if the candidate presents two pieces, these should contrast with each other, thus giving candidates greater scope to demonstrate interpretative understanding. The syllabus requires that at least one of the pieces must be fully notated (in any appropriate manner), and it is beneficial if Centres enclose a copy of this with their submission.

Marking was mainly accurate and consistent and Centres have this year looked more favourably on their less able candidates, meaning that fewer 'lowest' marks had to be raised. Most Centres made comments in support of the mark awarded and some assessors had gone to considerable lengths to ensure a perceptive overview of each performance that was given. It is helpful to Moderators if assessors comment on the level of attainment achieved in each of the five marking criteria and on how well, or otherwise, the candidate has worked during the year.

Some Centres found difficulty when awarding marks for the first criterion (the range of technical and musical skills demonstrated) and for the last one (technical control of the instrument) and were over-harsh in their assessment. Assessors are reminded that they should consider these aspects in the context of the level of the examination involved.

Most Centres presented clearly labelled and well produced video and audio tapes/CDs. This greatly assisted Moderators in their work. It is essential that individual candidates can be identified, and this should be borne in mind, particularly with ensemble performances. Some Centres helpfully used the Working Marksheet to identify candidates by reference to their position in the group on the video, and others provided a separate sheet of explanations.

Centres are reminded that all associated documentation, including the MS1 computer form, should be included in the submission.