

MUSIC

<p>Paper 9483/11 Listening</p>

Key messages

Candidates should take note in **Section A** of the number of marks available for each part question, when considering the length of each answer. There were some over-long responses for single-mark questions. Conversely, there were sometimes short answers containing just one or two observations, where the number of available marks indicated a fuller response was required.

Centres should note that answers in **Section A** need not be written in continuous prose. Bulleted points are acceptable.

When writing essays for **Section B**, candidates should take care with the organisation of their ideas and references. If a comparison is required between two works or movements, then it is helpful if musical features, for instance instrumentation or tonality, are compared in turn.

General comments

It was clear that candidates had engaged with the set works, and were often able to refer to the music with real familiarity, understanding and enthusiasm. This was particularly the case in **Section B**. Here, candidates were able to write, sometimes at length and with consistent and specific detail, to explain how the works created contrast or suggested a mood of calmness. In **Section C** candidates were able to discuss, often with insight and support from direct references to pertinent illustrations, the issues raised in the questions. There were sometimes different interpretations taken in answers, all valid and creditable.

Some candidates were relatively less familiar with the set works from the Baroque in **Section A**. This was clear from the incorrect answers given to the opening short questions of the paper. These revealed an insecure grasp of compositional techniques and devices found in the music of the period. The effect of this insecurity of period knowledge was revealed in **Questions 2 and 3** on the unprepared extract. Here, less well prepared candidates sometimes struggled to explain what they could hear and see in the music in terms of the idioms of the period.

Some references to the music needed more detail to identify 'where and how'. For example, "tension is created by rising and falling dynamics" was not sufficiently specific, but when linked to "the rising and falling chromatic scales in octaves in the strings" there was no doubt about where in the Wagner overture the answer referred. This fuller answer clearly shows more understanding of what is happening in the music, and how it creates its effect.

The strongest answers referred to a few passages from the work(s), and dealt with them in detail. They also worked through the references in order, always making it clear what they were referring to.

The most successful answers introduced the music and pointed out how some passages achieved their desired effects. These answers frequently referred to instrumentation, harmony and tonality, texture and timbre, melodic and harmonic features and dynamics, as well as to other significant compositional techniques. Weaker answers focussed on detailed explanations of what candidates felt the music might be describing (which can often be only conjectural) and did not explain what was happening in the music.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify this passage as coming from the first movement of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto no. 5*.
- (b) Not all candidates were sufficiently familiar with the music to know that this passage is followed by the *ritornello*. A few were able to add that it is the final *ritornello*, though this detail was not needed to gain credit.
- (c) Nearly all answers correctly gave harpsichord.

Question 2

- (a) Few answers gained both marks here. Many candidates failed to understand from the length of the passage in question and the number of marks available, that only a general description of the alternating use of *concertino* and *ripieno* was required.
- (b) Very few candidates could identify this relationship.
- (c) Many answers correctly gave 'imperfect', but many incorrectly described the cadence as interrupted (deceptive) or perfect.
- (d) 'Texture' was largely misunderstood, with many candidates describing the music as 'rough' or 'smooth'. Only a small number of candidates correctly described the music as fugal (or contrapuntal or polyphonic).
- (e) Similarly, the use of suspension as a harmonic device in Baroque music was unfamiliar to many candidates.
- (f) Many candidates answered this well. There were also instances where, despite not knowing the term 'ascending sequence', candidates gave long descriptions to try to explain what was happening melodically.
- (g) This was often poorly answered, with many candidates not able to explain how the contrapuntal writing contributed to the structure of the passage.

Question 3

- (a) Answers here were generally successful in comparing the relative *tempi* of the two sections of music in the two performances. However, only a small number of candidates also compared the relative uses of *rallentando* to gain full marks.
- (b) This was quite well answered by most candidates. The difference in pitch was often observed, but this was not always the correct way round. A few candidates were able to go on to explain about Baroque pitch. The different embellishments from harpsichord and violin were observed, as well as the generally darker sound of performance B. The use of something other than harpsichord for the *continuo* in performance A was noticed by a few candidates, but it was identified variously as horn or oboe, rather than organ. The different approaches to articulation were noticed by fewer candidates. Answers needed to include comparisons of a good range of appropriate features in order to access the top band of marks.

Section B

Many answers here were too short, and were little more than extended paragraphs rather than structured essays. Only longer responses which were able to cover a range of observations on several musical features from appropriate passages from the music were able to access the higher mark bands.

Question 4

Few candidates attempted this question. Some candidates interpreted the question as asking for a comparison between the two works, while others gave answers which described contrast within each work. Both interpretations were accepted.

The contrasting features between the two works included instrumentation, *tempi*, dissonance and dynamics.

Candidates were generally better at explaining how contrast is achieved within the Britten than in the Boulanger. For the Britten *Four Sea Interludes*, most candidates chose to describe the different moods and effects in *Storm*. Popular features for discussion were orchestration and dynamics. Fewer answers included the more stable meter and less dissonant harmony in the calmer passage, but many did observe that hints of the more violent storm music were never far away.

Contrast within *Les Sirènes* was more vague, with only a few candidates able to discuss changes in piano figuration or the changing vocal writing.

Question 5

This was a popular choice, and provided some very strong responses. For the Britten, the opening pages were well described, and the contrasting mood in the centre of the movement was understood and often well explained. The observation on calmness on the Overture to *Der fliegende Holländer* was less detailed. It was usually clear from the reference to a bar of silence which passage was being described. However, many answers did not correctly identify the solo use of the *cor anglais*, or the change to major tonality.

Section C

Question 6

There were few answers to this question. Responses included descriptions of guitar tab, both partial and full, as well as examples of notation from world music. In some cases candidates referred to wholly oral traditions, as well as to Western genres featuring improvisation or non-notated traditional embellishments.

Question 7

This was a popular choice and in many cases was very well answered. Many candidates explained the evolution of jazz styles from their African roots and the early racial oppression in America, through to the influence of Latin America in the 'jungle music' of the late Forties and the 'cool jazz' of the fifties. Other popular references were to the evolution of traditional music under Western influence and modern technology into genres such as K-pop. Most answers were well supported by specific references to musical examples.

Question 8

This question was not always successfully answered. Many responses did not focus consistently on vocal groups, describing instead different roles for solo vocalists. The more focused responses discussed the use of choruses in stages works, and backing groups in popular music. There were a few references to a *capella* singing, as well to African tribal singing.

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<p>Paper 9483/12 Listening</p>

Key messages

Candidates should take note in **Section A** of the number of marks available for each part question, when considering the length of each answer. There were some over-long responses for single-mark questions. Conversely, there were sometimes short answers containing just one or two observations, where the number of available marks indicated a fuller response was required.

Centres should note that answers in **Section A** need not be written in continuous prose. Bulleted points are acceptable.

When writing essays for **Section B**, candidates should take care with the organisation of their ideas and references. If a comparison is required between two works or movements, then it is helpful if musical features, for instance instrumentation or tonality, are compared in turn.

General comments

It was clear that candidates had engaged with the set works, and were often able to refer to the music with real familiarity, understanding and enthusiasm. This was particularly the case in **Section B**. Here, candidates were able to write, sometimes at length and with consistent and specific detail, to explain how the works created contrast or suggested a mood of calmness. In **Section C** candidates were able to discuss, often with insight and support from direct references to pertinent illustrations, the issues raised in the questions. There were sometimes different interpretations taken in answers, all valid and creditable.

Some candidates were relatively less familiar with the set works from the Baroque in **Section A**. This was clear from the incorrect answers given to the opening short questions of the paper. These revealed an insecure grasp of compositional techniques and devices found in the music of the period. The effect of this insecurity of period knowledge was revealed in **Questions 2 and 3** on the unprepared extract. Here, less well prepared candidates sometimes struggled to explain what they could hear and see in the music in terms of the idioms of the period.

Some references to the music needed more detail to identify 'where and how'. For example, "tension is created by rising and falling dynamics" was not sufficiently specific, but when linked to "the rising and falling chromatic scales in octaves in the strings" there was no doubt about where in the Wagner overture the answer referred. This fuller answer clearly shows more understanding of what is happening in the music, and how it creates its effect.

The strongest answers referred to a few passages from the work(s), and dealt with them in detail. They also worked through the references in order, always making it clear what they were referring to. The most successful answers introduced the music and pointed out how some passages achieved their desired effects. These answers frequently referred to instrumentation, harmony and tonality, texture and timbre, melodic and harmonic features and dynamics, as well as to other significant compositional techniques. Weaker answers focussed on detailed explanations of what candidates felt the music might be describing (which can often be only conjectural) and did not explain what was happening in the music.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This was correctly identified by most candidates as a minuet.
- (b) All candidates who correctly identified minuet scored at least one mark here.
- (c) There were many correct answers here, achieving both marks. Some incorrectly gave ternary.

Question 2

- (a) There were relatively few full answers here, indicating some general weakness when engaging with harmony. Some candidates achieved one mark for observing 'diminished 7th', and some scored one mark for observing the semitone descent between the two chords.
- (b) A very large number of responses correctly gave 'imperfect', though no candidates offered 'Phrygian'.
- (c) A few candidates appeared not to understand the term 'texture', but most were able to gain the mark. 'Polyphonic' was accepted as indicating that the contrapuntal texture had been recognised.
- (d) Most candidates understood what was happening here and achieved both marks.
- (e) This was well answered with nearly all candidates achieving both marks.
- (f) Many candidates found this question challenging. Only a few were able to give details of the contrapuntal entries which gave structure to the passage.

Question 3

- (a) All candidates gained some credit here, but few answers gave sufficient observations to achieve full credit. The extended rests in Performance A were well observed, as were the short silences towards the end of the passage. Performance B's short harpsichord flourishes during rests were mentioned by most candidates, as were the influence of different articulations. However, few candidates observed that both performances omitted the cello and *continuo* quaver at the end of bar 1.
- (b) Candidates generally managed this question well. Most candidates identified the difference in pitch and related this to the Baroque context. Other popular features for comment included *tempi*, articulation and ornamentation. If answers are to access the top band of marks, it is important that they cover a full range of features, relating them to the context of the Baroque, or to performance practices.

Section B

A few answers here were too short, and were little more than extended paragraphs rather than structured essays. Only those longer responses which were able to cover a range of observations on several musical features from appropriate passages from the music were able to access the higher mark bands.

Question 4

This was the most popular choice for candidates. All answers made a comparison which included *Storm*. Some candidates chose just one other contrasting *Interlude*, while others dealt in rather less detail with all four movements. Candidates were able to discuss features of *tempo*, dynamics, instrumentation and tonality, as well as giving details of melodic features and thematic treatment.

Question 5

Candidates here were able to do well when describing dramatic tension in the Wagner *Overture*. Nearly all chose to describe the features of the opening section, and did this well. This was often contrasted with the quieter passage featuring Senta's theme, preceded by a dramatic silence. The creation of tension in *Les Sirènes*, is more subtle, but some candidates were able to show an understanding of the contribution of different piano figurations, choral textures and of harmony and tonality in Boulanger's writing.

Section C

Question 6

Many responses to this question gave accounts of how the Western classical orchestra evolved across several periods. Others gave contrasting examples of the Western orchestra with ensembles from world music. These included ensembles from Chinese and Japanese music, as well as gamelan.

Question 7

Many candidates attempted this question. Many answers described how contrast and variety can be found in Western classical and pop music. There were some detailed explanations of how performances of traditional genres such as Indian instrumental music are structured to give contrast.

Question 8

This question was answered well. Candidates were able to give explanations of how music is used for celebration, ritual (both spiritual and secular) and of course for entertainment. Many discussed the contribution of music therapy in the treatment of mental health. Others observed the deeper appreciation and satisfaction to be gained by listening to 'art' music, or the subtleties of jazz. Many more explained the thrill of performance.

MUSIC

<p>Paper 9483/13 Listening</p>

Key messages

Candidates should give their answers to reflect the number of marks available for each question. For example, a question worth six marks will not have sufficient detail if a list of just two or three words is given as the answer.

Many candidates would benefit from becoming more confident with harmony and tonality. A lack of understanding in these areas was revealed both in some of the short-answer questions and the longer questions requiring information about keys and cadences.

General comments

It was clear that candidates had engaged with the set works, and were often able to refer to the music with real familiarity, understanding and enthusiasm. This was particularly the case in **Section B**. Here, candidates were able to write, sometimes at length and with consistent and specific detail, to explain how the works created contrast or suggested a mood of calmness. In **Section C** candidates were able to discuss, often with insight and support from direct references to pertinent illustrations, the issues raised in the questions. There were sometimes different interpretations taken in answers, all valid and creditable.

Some candidates were relatively less familiar with the set works from the Baroque in **Section A**. This was clear from the incorrect answers given to the opening short questions of the paper. These revealed an insecure grasp of compositional techniques and devices found in the music of the period. The effect of this insecurity of period knowledge was revealed in **Questions 2 and 3** on the unprepared extract. Here, less well prepared candidates sometimes struggled to explain what they could hear and see in the music in terms of the idioms of the period.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Nearly all candidates correctly identified the extract as being from the second movement of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto no. 5*. Candidates who gave the correct tempo marking of *Affettuoso* were also given credit but no other tempo indications were accepted.
- (b) Candidates usually gained both marks for this question, mentioning the slow tempo, the fact that fewer instruments are playing than in the first movement or that it is in the (relative) minor. A small number of candidates referred to the fact that it has a time signature of 4/4. No credit was given for polyphonic/contrapuntal texture, as it is not the only movement to feature this.
- (c) Nearly all candidates correctly named the violin and (Baroque) flute, but there were occasionally other suggestions such as oboe or even clarinet.

Question 2

- (a) Many candidates gained at least one of the two marks available for either diminished and/or seventh. Some candidates named the notes, for which no credit was given.
- (b) A relatively small number of candidates correctly identified the key as C minor.

- (c) Many candidates correctly identified the cadence as imperfect but no candidates named it as Phrygian. However, all other types of cadence (perfect, plagal and interrupted) were also suggested.
- (d) Many candidates gained a mark for correctly identifying the suspension in the second violin.
- (e) Candidates often gained at least one of the two marks available for either descending and/or sequence. For example, an answer of 'imitation one note lower' was given a mark of 1.
- (f) In answering this question many candidates mentioned features of the music which had nothing to do with structure. Marks were most frequently awarded for noting the 3-part counterpoint and the imitation or repetition at the end of the extract. A few candidates referred to some of the cadences and/or modulations, but not in sufficient detail to be awarded all six marks available for this question. There were many points which could have been included in an answer to achieve the six marks, and candidates needed to give correctly identified keys and/or cadences, with bar numbers. For this question some candidates mentioned the sequence referred to in (e), but this was not given credit here.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates noticed that in Performance A there was very little ornamentation, with just the trill (with a turn) on the RH of the harpsichord on the penultimate notes and that Performance B featured much more ornamentation on the violin (though viola and even cello were suggested). This gained partial credit, but in order to achieve full credit, much more detail was required, explaining what the violin actually played.
- (b) Candidates who were most successful in this question mentioned a large number of differences and similarities, comparing each feature between the two performances and gave contextual information where relevant. They gave consideration to all the features listed in the question, plus others. Features frequently mentioned included the difference in pitch, the slower Andante section in Performance B and the difference in articulation. Candidates who did not give any contextual information, such as general features of music from the period and performance practices were not able to access the higher band descriptors. Occasionally candidates repeated information from (a) for their answer to this part, for which no credit was given.

Section B

In answers to both essays, some candidates took the opportunity to write either a short summary of the content of the work or movement, or to simply say how the composer had evoked the sea, but neither of these approaches answered the question. Some answers were also short, with not enough detail to reach the higher band descriptors.

The most successful responses often took the approach of looking at a particular element and comparing the composers' use of it in both works. Elements included instrumentation, harmony, dynamics, texture, metre and melodic features such as scales. Some references to the music needed more detail to identify 'where and how'. For example, "tension is created by rising and falling dynamics" was not sufficiently specific, but when linked to "rising and falling chromatic scales in octaves in the strings" there was no doubt where in the Wagner overture the answer referred. This fuller answer clearly shows more understanding of what is happening in the music, and how it creates its effect. Less successful responses often discussed features of one work and then moved on to the other.

Question 4

Many candidates chose to answer this question on the ways dramatic tension is created in one of Britten's *Four Sea Interludes* and Wagner's *Overture from Der fliegende Holländer*. As would be expected, most candidates chose to refer to features of *Storm* from *Four Sea Interludes*, but some candidates did mention other movements.

Some answers hardly featured the word 'tension', preferring instead just to talk in general terms about what is heard in the works. Other answers gave detail that made it clear where in the work they were describing and how it created dramatic tension. A few answers described the sections of the Wagner where there is little, if any, tension, resulting in these parts of the essay not gaining any credit.

Question 5

A number of candidates chose to answer the question on the suggestion of calmness in Boulanger's *Les Sirènes* and Wagner's *Overture* from *Der fliegende Holländer*. Many candidates were able to select a number of significant features from both works and describe them in detail to explain how calmness was created. Some answers were uneven in that they discussed one work in far more detail than the other.

Section C

In answers to all the questions in this section there was a wide range of styles of music, sometimes described in detail. Weaker answers mentioned specific works only briefly, without giving any information about how they supported the candidate's stance. In extreme cases only the title of the work was given, with no description of any particular features of the work.

Question 6

Answers which received most credit began with a definition of fusion and then a description of a few carefully chosen styles which exhibited the features of fusion. These candidates explained how the two styles had been combined and which features of the fusion came from each style. Specific works were mentioned, together with the features they exhibited. Weaker answers often did not have a clear picture of what fusion was and sometimes mentioned many different styles, but only very superficially.

Question 7

In this question, describing the challenges of listening to music from cultures other than your own, there were some very personal accounts. Candidates described the traditional music from where they come from and explained how this might be difficult for others to listen to. Specific features of the music were described and particular works mentioned, together with the features they exhibited. Candidates then went on to discuss one or more contrasting styles of music, originating from elsewhere in the world and how it might present difficulties for those listening to it. In common with the other weaker answers to questions in **Section C**, answers receiving less credit either did not refer to enough styles and pieces of music, or listed many, but did not give much detail about them.

Question 8

Most candidates spent some time discussing the issue of words or lyrics in answers to this question. Answers which received marks in the higher band descriptors also considered how voices can imitate instrumental sounds and vice versa and the creative opportunities of improvisation, including scat singing. Specific styles and pieces were mentioned, drawing attention to the relevant features of the music. Again, weaker responses did not discuss particular pieces and styles in enough detail to be awarded marks in the higher band descriptors.

MUSIC

<p>Paper 9483/02 Practical Music</p>
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Key messages

- Centre assessors should provide comments in support of the mark awarded on all working marksheets.
- Copies of the music performed in **Element 1** must be included in the folio.
- Candidates should be encouraged to research and listen to a variety of music before starting the composition folio.
- DVD's and CD's should be checked carefully before dispatch, preferably on more than one machine.
- The sample sent to Cambridge should be the work of 6 *complete* candidates (including the highest and lowest-marked), not 6 different folios for each component.
- Regular opportunities to perform in front of the camera could be built into the scheme of work to help prepare candidates for their performances.

The majority of Centres have adapted to the new specification well and candidates submitted a great variety of work in both Elements. The range of instruments offered was very wide – everything from accordion to xylophone, but with plenty of singers and pianists in between – and there were a number of World Music performances in **Element 1**. There was evidence of considerable enthusiasm and creativity in **Element 2** and a substantial number of live recordings ably demonstrated active music-making.

There were some outstanding performances in **Element 1** and many well-prepared candidates scored very highly in this part of the examination. Candidates performed best when not playing at the absolute limit of their technical ability and Centres are reminded that candidates should select pieces that are technically and musically appropriate for their own stage of musicianship, rather than striving for a standard that is – for the moment – beyond them. The performance should contain a selection of *contrasting* music – normally more than one piece – so that a range of technical and expressive skills are demonstrated. Candidates are no longer required to introduce the recital with spoken contextual detail about the music, but it is very helpful if they announce their name and the titles and composers of their chosen pieces although not compulsory. Although the **Element 1** performance does not have to be recorded in one continuous take, many candidates performed as part of an informal concert. Candidates can perform in an ensemble, but the individual part must be clearly discernible. A single bass player in a rock band can be easily assessed, but it is very difficult to reliably moderate a singer in a choir if there are several more performers doubling the part. Some solo recitals would have really benefited from an accompanist – as guidance, if there is a published accompaniment, it should be provided. Backing CD's are also acceptable. Please ensure that the candidate's instrument, hands, face and (if appropriate) feet are visible on the video.

Each assessment criteria (pages 26–31 in the syllabus) has detailed notes which indicate precisely how candidates should be credited and teachers are advised to consider these carefully before making their judgements. Although there was much evidence of careful marking, some Centres were rather generous in their assessment, particularly in the middle and lower bands.

For **Element 2** there was much evidence of imagination, creativity and a willingness to experiment, to innovate and to refine. Initial research and critical listening to the music of other composers is essential and candidates were credited for this in Assessment Criteria A. Many candidates provided detailed notes and commentaries to support their compositional choices which help to inform the finished product. Candidates should be encouraged to concentrate on musical detail rather than background contextual information or in-depth discussion of lyrics. Most candidates worked very confidently with notation, but if a written score was not provided, the strongest accompanying written statements comprehensively guided the listener through the composition. Some candidates might have benefited from keeping the instrumental resources relatively small: when working with music technology, it is easy to add more and more instruments to the score – however this does not necessarily make a better piece. Some of the most successful submissions were confined to duets or trios – the status of each part had been carefully considered; there was clarity of

structure and sufficient variety of texture and timbre without the composer (or the listener) being overwhelmed by a full orchestra or wind band.

Some folios were rather generously marked, particularly in Assessment Criteria D (Communication). The use of music technology does not guarantee high marks: candidates should be encouraged to leave enough time at the end of the course to review both the score and the initial recording. Some submissions in the top bands were missing articulation, dynamics and phrase marks on the score, and recordings would have benefited from careful mixing to adequately reflect the composer's intention.

Administrative Points

It is clear that most Centres put a great deal of time and effort into preparing materials for dispatch. However, problems do occur after submission, and attention to the following administrative points will ensure a smooth path to moderation.

- Include copies of the music performed in **Element 1**. In some genres, e.g. jazz, a lead sheet may be more appropriate.
- Comments to support the mark awarded are always helpful and will be carefully considered.
- Check the addition of marks on the Working Mark Sheets and the subsequent transfer to the MS1.
- In **Element 1**, the camera and the microphone should be placed close enough to the candidate so that expressive and technical detail is discernible.
- Ensure that DVDs and CD's are correctly labelled and check that they will play – preferably on more than one machine. If recordings are sent on a USB, these should be in a standard format that will play on a home computer.
- If there are several performances on the same disk, these should be on separate labelled tracks.
- Check that **Element 2** scores are complete, with pages in the right order. Recordings should match the scores.