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Examiners' Report

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Preface

Congratulations to candidates who were successful in the 2007 GCE Music examinations - and to teachers for their hard work, not least in providing all the paperwork and recordings for the performance and composition papers. The overall standard was slightly higher than in 2006, which was very encouraging.

This report is the single most important form of communication between examiners and centres, and is essential reading. **But please also consult the Edexcel website (www.edexcel.org.uk) regularly**, for example for updates on prescribed works, and on the new 2008 specifications.

As in former years, the bulk of this report is devoted to comments by the principal examiners on candidates' performance in the various papers. But first we repeat from 2006 three important sections on recordings, terminology, and administration of coursework.

Recordings

Good recordings help candidates by presenting their work in the best possible light. The following remarks have been compiled particularly for the benefit of those with limited expertise in the area of recording.

Condenser microphones are excellent for recording live ensembles; but if they are too expensive to buy it may be possible to borrow a couple for the final recordings, possibly from a local radio or theatre. A good stereo microphone connected to a minidisk recorder is often perfectly adequate.

In most concert halls a pair of microphones (a 'crossed pair'), or a single stereo one, will be positioned above the front stalls, and if possible a corresponding arrangement should be sought in the classroom. Classrooms are not ideal recording spaces because there tend to be many acoustic reflections but these can be eliminated with a little ingenuity (hung blankets or display boards). It is important to get a feel for the acoustics of the music room - but not at the last minute when staff and students are under pressure to record coursework. In some schools trials and tests could be packaged as a lesson in acoustics and recording earlier in the year for a Key Stage 3 class.

Use the level meters to ensure that the signal is neither too soft nor too loud, both at the stage of recording the performance and if it is subsequently transferred to tape. The meter indicator should hover around the 0dB Mark, with a little 'red' showing. Always check that the recording has been successful and that both left and right channels are audible. One of the commonest problems with recordings of computer-based compositions is a flat, uniform mix. It takes only a few seconds to open the mixer displays and add some subtlety, thus ensuring a good balance in which the important parts (or tracks) emerge clearly.

If using cassette tapes, the best results will be obtained from new tapes, rather than from those on which previous recordings have been made.

List of terms commonly used in questions for Papers 31, 32, 61 and 62

Forces: the instruments and/or voices used.

Timbre: the characteristic sound quality of an instrument or voice. We can tell an oboe from a flute when both play the same pitch.

Harmony: the sounding together of different pitches, most commonly to produce recognisable chords. In a discussion of harmony, important terms may include diatonic, chromatic and functional. (Harmony is not a synonym for accompanying instruments and textures.)

Melody: a discussion of melody may well deal with the ranges of voices or instruments, phrase-lengths, repetitions of phrases, melodic shapes (e.g. arch-shaped), conjunct and/or disjunct movement, sequence, continuity or fragmentation. Word-painting as such is irrelevant.

Rhythm: a discussion of rhythm may well focus on the use of recurring patterns, dotted rhythms, equal note-lengths, syncopation, hemiola and metrical organisation.

Structure (or Form): commonly-used structures are binary, ternary, rondo, sonata, 12-bar blues, verse and refrain, ground bass, strophic, variation, fugue, etc.

Texture: texture refers to the relationship between the various lines or strands in a composition, or sometimes more simply to the number of parts in use. Important terms are monophonic, two-part, three-part or four-part; contrapuntal (free or imitative, fugal or canonic); heterophony; antiphony; homophony; melody-dominated homophony. An organum-like use of parallelism (as in some works by Debussy) could also be referred to under texture. Candidates will be credited for distinguishing different types of texture, the number of voices/parts involved, whether melody lines transfer from one part to another etc. Expressions such as 'thick' and 'thin' are too vague to receive credit.

Tonality: often broadly synonymous with key. Important vocabulary will include functional/non-functional/modal; modulation. It is important to be able to identify keys and comment on their use, including the relationship between one key and another. (Tonality is not a synonym for sound quality/timbre.)

Terms mainly applicable to Paper 62 include:

Handling of voices/instruments: most obviously how voices or instruments are exploited in terms of range and technical difficulty. A discussion of the 'handling of voices/instruments' will extend to consideration of texture (for example, an antiphonal texture will result from a particular method of 'handling' instruments or voices).

Idiomatic writing: this overlaps with the preceding to some extent. Strictly it concerns writing for particular voices and instruments with close and special regard to the ranges and capabilities of these voices and instruments. Idiomatic writing for the piano, for example, will always be playable even if very difficult, and will bring out the best qualities of the instrument.

Administration of coursework, especially in Paper 21

It is sometimes difficult for teachers to know how best to help students complete coursework tasks without laying themselves open to suggestions of malpractice. In all cases examiners not only rely upon, but appreciate, teachers' professionalism. Here are some hints, addressed directly to teachers. **Please refer also to the report on Paper 21.**

You will often find it best to frame remarks as questions (for example, 'Do you think this piece lasts for a minute as the question requires?').

You may give general guidance on how fully or otherwise the requirements of the task have been met. This will take different forms according to the type of exercise. With A(ii), for example, you may need to comment on an excessive use of straight repetition and/or failure to create any contrast, on failure sufficiently to exploit the instrument, or on impracticality. With B(i), you might, when looking at a draft, ask 'Have you checked that there are no consecutives?' (What you must not then do is point to specific cases, and/or suggest solutions.) In some circumstances the candidate might be asked if he or she feels able to exploit a wider harmonic vocabulary. In B(ii) a reference to the inclusion of all necessary accidentals might well be useful.

Always check that each task has been completed. For example, has the candidate left a bar blank in A(i), or written less than a minute's worth in D(ii)? As marks are awarded for presentation, you may refer to the accuracy and neatness of the work, preferably in general terms. One way of tackling notational problems is to invent short practice exercises in which points such as how to beam quavers correctly can be addressed without your having to refer directly to specific situations in a candidate's actual examination submission. With exercises such as B(ii) and C(ii), you may point out to a candidate that the instrument(s) to be used have not been specified - without of course suggesting what instrument(s) would be suitable. In options where performance directions (tempo markings, dynamics and articulation) are necessary, you can again make helpful but generalised observations.

Candidates must not collaborate on coursework tasks. You may choose to allow access to the Paper 21 question paper only under controlled conditions in the classroom. Where candidates do take the paper outside the classroom, you must be sure that no collusion is likely to take place. Advise students that they will have to sign a declaration before their Paper 21 scripts are submitted, and that you have the right to refuse a countersignature if you doubt the authenticity of the work submitted. However you manage the working of Paper 21, you must monitor students' progress regularly, and before submission must look in detail at each script before agreeing to countersign it as authentic.

Performance (6701/11 6701/12)

The examiners wish to thank candidates and teachers for their efforts in preparing the performances, recordings and paperwork associated with this unit. The examiners also acknowledge the vital role played by instrumental and vocal teachers in preparing candidates for this examination.

Paper 11 is assessed externally; Paper 12 is assessed by the centre and moderated by the examiner appointed to mark Paper 11. The assessment criteria are those published in the 2007 Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (ICE).

6701/11: Solo Performance

An extremely wide range of musical instruments and styles/genres was offered for assessment. In addition to work played on traditional instruments, examiners reported an increase in the number of performances submitted in rock and pop idioms. Few E (Easier) level submissions were offered this year, and more S (Standard) level submissions were in evidence, but the majority of candidates continue to submit work at the 'more difficult' (MD) level. This was not always to the candidates' advantage. Teachers and candidates are reminded that the standard required for examination at this level is **Grade 5** and the full range of marks is available to those who present pieces at this level. Pieces of Grade 6 standard and above qualify for the MD scaling, but no additional credit is available to candidates offering works of Grade 7 or 8 standard. The work of the few candidates who offered pieces at Grades 1-3 level was assessed according to the mark scheme, but final marks were reduced by the application of scaling.

Many candidates overstretched themselves by playing pieces that were too demanding technically or musically, and this resulted in lower marks for both accuracy and interpretation than might otherwise have been the case. Candidates should choose pieces which they can play convincingly under examination conditions; offering a second instrument is not recommended unless candidates are equally proficient on both instruments. Nevertheless, there was an increase in the number of first class performances presented, showing an excellent technical command of the instrument/voice and a convincing sense of style. The number of candidates achieving very low raw marks in the 1-7 mark band decreased again this year and the mean mark for this paper remained similar to that of 2006.

The majority of candidates were able to fulfil the 5-6 minute playing time requirement set for this examination. However, a significantly higher number of candidates presented **short submissions** this year; one raw mark was deducted for a small shortfall, and a reduction of one difficulty level was made for a very short submission. Pauses between pieces, announcements, and tuning are not included in the playing time, but where candidates offered two or more related movements from a larger work, examiners were instructed to allow the pauses between these movements.

The majority of candidates performed more than one piece for Paper 11. Where candidates offered more than one piece, each piece was assessed individually and generally an average raw mark was calculated. If pieces were of significantly

disparate lengths and were awarded widely differing marks, examiners used a formula to reflect the relative length and quality.

As in previous years, teachers' estimates of difficulty levels were usually correct, but occasionally required adjustment or even completion by examiners. The difficulty levels booklet used by examiners is available on the Edexcel website (www.edexcel.org.uk) and centres are encouraged to refer to it extensively. Only a small number of centres had marked their candidates' Paper 11 work in error.

Centres are reminded that candidates at AS level are not required to perform the entire submission on a single occasion. They may perform their work on different occasions and may re-record their work if they so wish. Some candidates had recorded up to four pieces one after the other and the quality of their performance deteriorated as they tired. Whilst it is recognised that centres have individual preferences as to how to manage their candidates' recordings, it is recommended that as many performances as possible are recorded by each candidate as the course proceeds, thus avoiding additional pressure and anxiety in the weeks preceding the coursework submission date. This will be of particular help to nervous candidates.

Centres are reminded that it is solo performance which is examined in Paper 11 and moderated in Paper 12, even though ensemble performances are listed in the log. In order to make an adequate assessment of any performance, it is vital that the individual contribution of each candidate is clearly audible and a score provided. The work of a small number of candidates was impossible to assess effectively. A significant amount of solo material is now available in jazz styles (e.g. Associated Board Jazz Syllabus material) and rock styles (e.g. Rock School) for students to be able to submit solo performances.

Centres are reminded that examiners reserve the right to refuse to assess work containing foul language or offensive lyrics.

Pieces with a written accompaniment **must** be presented with the accompaniment, a requirement that is still overlooked in a few cases. Most of the accompanying was very good this year - examiners reported a decrease in the number of performances that were hindered by insensitive and unreliable accompanying. Centres must ensure that candidates are supported by competent and sensitive accompanists and that adequate rehearsal time is made available.

A score **must** be provided for all performances. Some centres continue to supply a reference recording instead of a notated score - although this is permitted at GCSE level, this is not acceptable at AS level. Deviations from the score in jazz/rock and musical theatre numbers were generally accepted where deemed to be stylistically convincing. Some scores were annotated with helpful information regarding divergences between the printed music and the candidates' performance. However, some unacceptable scores in tab were submitted - these were often incomplete, and clearly downloaded from the net as an afterthought. The use of backing tracks continues to be popular, but candidates need to be made aware that balance and tuning, as well as ensemble with the backing will form part of the assessment.

Candidates are reminded that accurate intonation is a vital component of any performance in any style. It is vital that candidates tune their instruments effectively before they record their work, and that they maintain accurate intonation throughout their performances. Examiners noted that, as in previous years, a significant number of performances this year were compromised by poor intonation, and this adversely affected the mark awarded for accuracy.

6701/12: Performing During the Course

Paper 12 involves the moderation of the recorded solo. If the moderator finds a disparity of marking, this numerical difference is then applied to the mark for the whole coursework log. The accuracy of the centre's marking of the recorded solo is therefore of the highest importance. Sometimes the centre's component marks (accuracy and interpretation) did not add up to the chosen holistic raw mark for the recorded solo. **If an arithmetical error is discovered by the moderator, the holistic raw mark will be taken as the intended total mark for the recorded solo.** Teacher-examiners are advised to base their assessment on the recording of the solo rather than on the live performance, using the published assessment criteria to arrive at a mark that matches the quality of the candidate's performance. Comments on the recorded solo should include phrases from the published mark descriptors.

A wide range of marks was awarded in the moderation of the recorded solo. There were many truly outstanding and impressive performances which fully justified the high marks awarded by the centres. However, moderators reported that a large number of centres continue to award unjustifiably high marks to candidates whose work does not merit these marks. Some candidates reached similar standards in the recorded solo to those achieved in Paper 11; others evidently found the recording occasion for Paper 12 more relaxed and were able to perform to a slightly higher standard.

Most candidates presented a recording of a solo piece for moderation, but some centres had wrongly allowed candidates to present an ensemble piece as the recorded item for moderation. Many candidates presented a short item for moderation, and this was perfectly acceptable, as there is no stipulated duration for the recorded solo in Paper 12. Centres are reminded that the overall duration requirement of the *entire submission of four coursework pieces* is 5-6 minutes. The recorded solo must be listed as item 1 in the log; occasionally a different piece from item 1 was recorded for moderation. Logged performances for Paper 12 may not be duplicated from Paper 11, and *vice versa*.

The specification stipulates that the coursework log must include a performance of a **solo** (the recorded solo), a **composition** and an **ensemble**. As stated in the ICE document, the full mark range was not available to candidates who did not comply with the specification requirements. Most candidates were able to offer four pieces of coursework, although the item most frequently omitted from the log was the performance of the candidate's original **composition**. Deductions are made if the coursework log is incomplete. Teacher-examiners are **requested not to apply their own deductions (to either marks or scaling) if a candidate has not fulfilled all of the syllabus requirements.**

Moderators reported that many centres had experienced problems in scaling to Difficulty Level. Centres are reminded that a holistic mark (which must be a **whole number**) should be awarded for the coursework log. Centres should then select a **single** difficulty level for the log as a whole. The holistic mark is then scaled to the difficulty level using the grid provided in the ICE document.

Although the coursework log must include a performance of one of the candidate's original **compositions**, there is no requirement for this piece to be offered as the recorded solo. Although some compositions represented ideal vehicles for both

technical and musical expression, many were inadequate for these purposes and there was frequently a significant mismatch between the printed score and its realisation. Centres are reminded that **improvisations** based on pre-existent melodies (folk or pop songs/jazz standards) are not accepted as compositions for the coursework log.

Coursework logs were not always detailed or complete. Many logs omitted to specify whether a piece listed was a solo or an ensemble. Sometimes pieces lacked composers' names and the description of the make-up of an ensemble lacked detail, thus making it difficult for the moderator to establish the candidate's precise role. Individual difficulty levels were also occasionally omitted. Centres are asked to check that all the information provided on the form is complete and accurate prior to the despatch of the work to the moderator.

Some centres had taken immense care to complete the marking and commentaries on Paper 12. The best commentaries consisted of balanced, objective accounts which clearly justified the teacher-examiner's choice of mark for both the recorded solo and the folio as a whole. However, there was still a tendency for comments to focus on a candidate's commitment to the centre rather than on the quality of the performances listed in the log. Sometimes no commentaries were given; other accounts were minimal or rather generalised.

Moderators reported that there was a tendency for teachers to operate a restricted mark range using only the top two mark bands, whereas the recorded evidence suggested greater differentiation. A significant number of the recorded solos were marked either leniently or very leniently, with the consequence that the final coursework marks were often reduced in the moderation process.

Administration (6701/11 and 12)

Recordings

Although the majority of recordings were good or excellent, examiners were seriously concerned about the poor quality of taped recordings. In these instances, little attention had been given to matters such as recording balance, microphone placement, or sound levels, and poor-quality equipment was sometimes used. In some cases the candidates were barely audible or even inaudible because of low recording levels or poor balance (musical and or technical) between soloist and accompaniment. **Tapes and discs must be checked on completion of the recording to ensure that the work is accessible and present in its entirety.** Examiners reported some problems with missing or incomplete recordings and unplayable mini-disks. Back-up recordings should be made, and retained by centres in the event of loss or technical difficulties.

Centres are asked to provide recordings in one format only - tape, CD or MD. The use of long-play MD is not acceptable. If using CD or MD it would be appreciated if each piece (and announcement) were recorded on a separate track. Sometimes it was difficult to locate work as it had been recorded in a different order from that listed on the MAS1, or track marks or announcements were missing. However, many centres made the examiner's task easy by labelling work clearly and announcing centre, candidate and paper names and numbers for each submission, as well as sometimes providing a **detailed track list.**

Paperwork

Whilst some centres had completed all the required documentation meticulously, examiners reported that a large number of centres had to be contacted this year, in order to recover missing music, recordings or other information that had not been supplied as part of the original submission. These difficulties added to the examiners' workload and contributed to delays in the assessment process. A checklist is provided on the back of the MAS1 form to help centres compile each candidate's submission.

Hard copies of MAS1 forms are no longer supplied to centres - centres should download the latest version of the form from the Edexcel website. Centres should then present the four separate pages of the MAS1 as a folded A3 sheet. Centres are reminded that completed MAS1 forms must be sent for all candidates, even if they are not included in the sample.

Centres are reminded of the following:

- MAS1 form: the most recent version should be downloaded from the Edexcel website. Photocopied forms should be presented in A3 format folded into A4. The sample form printed in the Teachers' Guide should **not** be used as a template. All shaded areas should be completed.
- Difficulty Levels: these must appear as E, S, or MD unless work of lower than Grade 4 standard has been offered. For Paper 12 centres must decide on an average difficulty level for the four coursework performances. **Split difficulty levels (for example E/S or S/MD) should not be used.** The ICE document should be consulted for the correct scaling chart.
- Paper 11 Attendance registers: the top two copies are sent with the candidates' work. Fractional raw marks on Paper 12 must not be used.
- Paper 12 OPTEMS: final half marks from Paper 12 should be rounded up to the next whole number. Only the *yellow* copy is sent with the work to the moderator.
- Candidate and teacher-examiner **signatures** must appear on page 4 of the MAS1. External examiners' marks cannot be submitted to Edexcel without authentication of the candidates' work.
- **Photocopies of all items recorded for Papers 11 and 12** (solo parts only in the case of, for example, a movement from a flute sonata) must be sent as part of the submission. Lyrics of songs should not be submitted without at least some notation.
- Improvisations **must** be supplied with a stimulus, chart, or description of working methods. A computer-generated score produced after the performance is not acceptable.
- Sequencing: this is acceptable providing that the candidate performs the final track **live**, at the correct speed, and with no further editing.

Compositional Techniques (6702/21)

The mean mark for this Paper was slightly higher than in 2006, perhaps reflecting some of the more straightforward aspects of this year's Bach Chorale and the greater command of the basic techniques required for other options which many candidates appeared to have.

Baroque Counterpoint and Bach Chorale continue to be the most favoured options, but Serialism is now presented by almost as many candidates as the former of these. 32-Bar Pop Song accounts for a further one eighth of all submissions, with the remaining options being taken by only small numbers of candidates.

It is clear from the work submitted for other Units of the Specification that an understanding of basic harmony and counterpoint is a fundamental requirement for any musician, whatever area is eventually chosen for specialisation. Examiners are always pleased to see evidence of such understanding in the Techniques papers and would want to congratulate in particular those candidates who have been able to display this in musical and elegantly-crafted exercises.

Equally, such work needs to be informed by practical considerations and by a keen ear. Unfortunately, it continues to be the case that ambition sometimes runs ahead of technical control, resulting in unplayable passages in Minimalist pieces, out of range notes in Pop Song and Serialism and examples of very awkward and unpleasing melodic lines in all of these and in Baroque Counterpoint.

It is still the case that a significant number of candidates need much stronger grounding in musical theory. Notation is a means of communication. It therefore needs to be as simple, precise and clear as possible. Candidates whose work is marred by enharmonic confusion, incorrect notation of rests, misplaced accidentals and other similar errors are setting up unnecessary barriers for those who will read their work, either to play or to appraise it.

Finally, there has again been a significant number of cases of suspected collusion. These are taken very seriously by Edexcel and several centres have already been contacted by the Compliance Department. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that teachers have an important responsibility to see that work submitted is the unaided work of candidates. It therefore follows that the Authentication Form which they are asked to sign is an important document. It was disconcerting to hear that many examiners had to spend time contacting centres where these had not been completed correctly or at all.

Ai: Baroque Counterpoint

A large number of candidates scored quite well for Resources (ie basic technique), though there were significant numbers who lost marks at the joins, either into or out of, the given material. Mistakes were fairly commonly made also with the 6/4 - 5/3 progressions, where fourths were either not approached or not resolved correctly. In some cases, error was created at these points by dotting the first note inappropriately so that

the realisation of the figuring became incorrect. Some candidates failed to understand that the figure 4 on its own implies 5/4, not 6/4.

Candidates would earn higher marks for Style if they were to consider the character of the given material more fully, including its rhythmic nature and range of pitch. The higher marks for Style are awarded for lines which have a real sense of melodic direction, sufficient rhythmic interest, particularly considered in relation to the bass line, and use a range suitable both for their named instrument, especially when it is the flute, and for typical baroque two-part writing.

Aii: Minimalism

There were the usual problems over notation here, compounded rather than reduced by the inexpert use of computers. Many workings failed to introduce sufficient variety of tonality. Harmony was often crude and in some cases left the impression that the vertical combination of notes had been very little considered. Only a small handful of answers achieved 50 marks or more, and many were below 20. This did less than justice to the stimulus, which was well-focused and brimful of possibilities in terms of minimalist techniques.

Bi: Bach Chorale

This continues to be the most popular question, though perhaps not by as large a margin as many might assume. This year's question was felt by some to have been easier than last year's and this has probably been reflected in the considerable number of submissions that achieved 45 marks or more. However, the range was very wide and there were some scripts that received marks in single figures.

The question required four cadences to be harmonised, all in different keys though with D minor as the main tonic. The implication was that each was a perfect cadence, though there was an extra Style mark available for a successful interrupted cadence - this would have worked particularly well at the third cadence but very few saw this as a suitable way of breaking the otherwise unvaried pattern. Not all candidates were able to supply the necessary accidentals for the cadences in A minor and C major, with some very modal results at these points.

As with question Ai, candidates should consider very carefully how their work proceeds from and leads into the given material. In this case, there were the appropriate progressions from passing notes to consider and also the necessary resolution of a suspension. These matters, plus the need to avoid overlapping parts or consecutives with chords that follow, were the causes of many lost marks.

For high marks, something beyond a repeated 6/4 - 5/3 formula was expected and there were many ways to achieve this, including for example use of the diminished seventh chord on the sharpened fourth at bar 8, beat 1.

Bii: 32-Bar Pop Song

A majority of answers showed some competence in the realisation of the given harmonic scheme but again few scored high marks for Style. Melodic lines

tended to be based too much on arpeggio figures and the possibilities of sequence were not often appreciated. The strong rhythmic character of the given material seemed to mesmerise candidates into serving up much the same in the middle eight, thus losing marks for rhythmic innovation.

Presentation is still often weak in this question, both in manuscript answers and in computer-generated ones. It can only be repeated that it is not acceptable to omit either the given material or the chord symbols from either section if using a computer. Candidates should check very carefully to make sure that all bars have the correct number of beats, whether made up by notes or rests or a mixture of the two, and that all necessary accidentals, carefully positioned on the appropriate line or space, are included.

Ci: Renaissance Counterpoint

The general standard was good and there were comparatively few marks below 30 for this option. This was brought about chiefly by competence in the handling of the technique, and incorrect intervals, either harmonically or melodically, were fairly unusual. Handling of underlay was also mostly well done. Not all candidates were successful, however, in finding the ideal imitative points.

Cii: Serialism

Most answers displayed competence in the use of the row but relatively few went beyond that to create a convincing melody. The 6/8 metre seemed to cause problems for some candidates, who often strayed into 3/4 time without changing the time signature or, worse, produced bars with too few or too many beats. Many candidates need to consider more strongly the structural aspects of the melody and how a satisfactory sense of structure can be conveyed within this technique.

Di: Extended Vocal and Instrumental Techniques

As usual, there was a fairly small number of entries for this option. Many were basically competent in some respect or other but lacked imagination. However, there was one submission that really did show what might be done by someone who was able to exploit her instrument (in this case the cello) with authority and combine this with an enterprising quasi-serial use of the notes of the chosen stimulus.

Dii: Electro-Acoustic Music

There was some imaginative work from some centres, which it is pleasing to report. There were also fewer problem submissions than in previous years where the techniques have not always been understood.

Composition (6702/22)

Examiners felt that the standard of work was slightly improved over last year. The mean mark rose very slightly from 36/60 in 2006 to 36.9 in 2007. However, they reported fewer examples of excellent or outstanding work, and of very weak work. Overall, this is a high-achieving paper with almost 75% of candidates achieving above half marks.

The most popular topics were popular song (21%) and film music (20%), which have both now overtaken variations (13%) as the favourite option. This was followed by romantic miniatures which, at 11%, was matched by an unexpected increase in club dance pieces. The broad split between popular, film and studio-based work and pieces based on more traditional techniques is now 60 : 40, a further growth in favour of these styles. These tend to have a wider spread of marks, reflecting the wider ability range of the candidates who undertake these topics. Romantic miniatures, neo-classicism and fusions showed a higher proportion of marks in the 40-49 band, consistent with previous years when these topics tended to be chosen by the stronger candidates. The results for music theatre, previously a topic in which candidates achieved highly, were disappointing, and had smaller numbers (3%).

Comments on individual topics

There was a wide range of work for film and TV including pieces that gained full marks. The submissions included title themes, libraries of extracts and underscoring, sometimes with elaborate story boards. Many examiners commented that film compositions often lacked any descriptive comment or clue to the visual element, leaving the examiner to guess the intended context. Moreover, not all compositions were appropriate: there were examples of dance and sonata movements and serial compositions of a quite technical nature which had no discernible link with the film or TV medium. A commentary is not a requirement for this paper but a short indication of the candidate's intentions would be helpful here (this also applies to fusions and music theatre).

The popular song topic included more instrumentals this year, particularly compositions for guitars (linked presumably to a growth in the popularity of the electric guitar in the performance papers). Generally these scored highly on the use of the instrumental resources, based on the composer's knowledge of the instrument, although many songs in this category, whether instrumental or vocal, tended to rely on repetition and cut-and-paste in order to bolster the material.

There was a further increase in the number of serial compositions, most being submitted in the neo-classical and post-modern topics and there was some excellent work which was technically assured. This growth was matched by the growing popularity of serialism in the compositional techniques papers. It is worth noting, however, that Paper 21 requires a relatively short answer; on the other hand, many candidates struggled to produce an engaging serial piece lasting the full three minutes which are required for the composition paper - the most common problem was excessive unvaried and mechanical working of the row.

There was no obvious explanation for the increase in club dance pieces. Work tended either to be very good or very weak. The best candidates used strong, stylish material within a coherent structure, employed technology very confidently, and benefited from the mark scheme which allows examiners to credit imaginative rhythmic handling and selection of timbres.

Comments on the assessment criteria

There were fewer instances of under-length work this year. Short submissions usually led to a low mark under the Ideas criterion, and when this did occur it was often a problem with an entire centre, as if the mark schemes had not been properly understood.

Presentation continued to be the greatest cause of lost marks with undetailed scores being the most common reason. Most scores are now computer-generated and most of these employ Sibelius. These were generally neatly laid out and printed, thus gaining at least half marks, but it was those scores that included performance detail that gained most marks. The detail needs to be appropriate, however - candidates often provided copious but unsuitable (or even unplayable) bowing marks for strings or phrases randomly applied to lines of music with little sense of the structure beneath.

Recordings were mostly clear and it was evident that a live recording often resulted in a better piece because the candidate had had an opportunity to hear and rehearse their work during the recording process.

Resources and structure are the most commonly applied assessment criteria. As in previous years many candidates failed to demonstrate that they were aware of the difference between live and General MIDI instruments, having entered the parts on the computer with little apparent thought to the instruments that were to play them. Musical structures were reassuringly imaginative with an increasing number of submissions showing variety and contrast, including introductions, developments, middle eights and codas rather than bland repetitive sections connected together on the computer.

Harmony continues to be the criterion most often avoided by examiners because it is often the weakest feature, hindered by a small vocabulary of root position triads. Nonetheless, used well, such a limited vocabulary can still lead to a strong piece and examiners are able to reward creative work elsewhere in the mark scheme.

Administration

Fortunately, there were fewer examples of misdirected work and broken CDs this year although work recorded on CR-RW discs continues to cause problems on many examiner's hi-fi systems.

Listening (6703/31)

Many candidates tackled this year's paper with confidence and there were some very high marks recorded. The use of correct musical language continues to improve, and the best candidates made perceptive insights about the music they heard, although occasionally candidates gave confusing, or even contradictory, answers which had an impact on their overall marks.

Question 1 was generally well answered in terms of timbre, but less well so in terms of texture. Most candidates recognised the two percussion instruments in the introduction of 1 a) although some thought the timpani were a bass drum. 1 a) ii) was one of the weakest sections on the paper. Candidates were clearly struggling to find appropriate generic textural 'tags' to write down rather than describing what they actually heard. Answers here were often confusing when a simple description of what was happening in the music would have achieved high marks. In 1 b) the instruments were generally well recognised, but some had problems realising that the wind instrument was a horn. There were some bizarre answers here which once again sparked examiners into thinking about how often candidates might hear the real sound of instruments rather than digitally processed ones. The multi-choice textural elements of 1 b) were quite well answered on the whole.

Question 2 displayed a limited ability to recognise vocal types. 'Castrato' appeared in very many scripts. In all other respects the early sections of this question were quite well answered. Parts e) and f) were the downfall of many who were unable to separate melody from accompaniment. This has been a problem in questions from previous years. By focusing the candidates on a specific area of the music their responses were weaker than we would have hoped.

Question 3, Option A was attempted by a minority of candidates and generally with considerable success, most achieving at least 6 and many more than 10. The minority of candidates doing Option A seems to be shrinking. Reports from examiners would suggest that it is now less than 10%, and almost all do better than those doing Option B. The number of candidates attempting both options is small, and they usually do both poorly, with Option A the better of the two. The rhythmic aspects of this year's question were particularly well answered.

Whilst attempted by most candidates, Question 3, Option B produced some of the weakest responses on this year's paper. Whilst some candidates did well, others were clearly struggling. Most particularly the recognition of ornaments and the description of texture, once again, proved problematic. Very few candidates were able to suggest a suitable composer and fewer managed an appropriate original performance venue.

We are delighted to report that once again responses to Question 4 were much stronger this year. The weakest candidates are still unable to differentiate between major and minor tonality, and even some moderate candidates appear to be guessing keys and cadences; but the strongest candidates did very well on this question, compared to previous years. Several candidates gained full marks on this question this year.

Overall, this year's candidates produced a good level of appropriate responses to the music they heard.

Musical Understanding (Anthology) (6703/32)

There has been an improvement in standard this year in most areas of the paper, with markedly fewer very low marks. There continue to be numerous 'unbalanced' scripts, however, with a good response to one question paired with a weak attempt at the other.

Poor presentation and hand-writing continue to give cause for concern, and in spite of attempts to direct candidates as clearly as possible to focus on specific aspects of the music, many answers are still marred by irrelevance, especially in section (d) where the questions focus on specific aspects of the music. Inevitably, the indiscriminate listing of random points will almost certainly be subject to penalty on grounds of irrelevance. Some candidates limited the number of marks they earned simply by not proceeding much beyond a consideration of the opening bars of prescribed works.

Relatively few rubric infringements were reported, the commonest being the answering of all parts of sections (a) and (b), giving a location in (b) from a different area of study, and (very rarely) answering all questions on the paper.

Candidates still tend to write over-extended answers to subsections (a) and (c), perhaps because of insufficient command of appropriate terminology. Responses to question (c) as ever provided the most revealing indications of a candidate's musical understanding, showing clearly whether the student was able to proceed beyond the more superficial aspects of the score, e.g. whether they understood textural or harmonic aspects rather than dynamic indications.

Question 1

(a/b) *Additive rhythm* was the least popular option and, though often successfully located in the Tippett, rarely defined adequately. *Codetta* gave rise to surprisingly weak responses, as it was often located in the concluding bars of the recapitulation, rather than the exposition, of the Haydn. There were many correct definitions of *imperfect cadence*, but also many which were only partially correct (i.e. I to V); some candidates gave the interrupted cadence in the Wagner as an example. *Suspension* was rarely fully defined: most candidates managed at least two parts of the process, though the term 'preparation' was infrequently used.

(c) The transposition question was only occasionally correct: many candidates gave the wrong octave, or else omitted accidentals. Parts (ii) and (iii) were usually correct, but in (iv) candidates were more successful at picking out instrumental details than changes of key.

(d) There was a relatively good response to this question, especially in matters of instrumentation and texture. Candidates in the lower and middle ranges seemed to find it easier to comment on Haydn's symphony. Descriptions of the Wagner sometimes included irrelevant listings of leitmotifs, and the comparative density of the score perhaps posed additional problems.

Question 2

(a/b) *Drone* was usually explained in terms of 'long held note', and almost always correctly located. *Hexatonic* and *portamento* were rarely attempted, and some

candidates experienced difficulty in explaining *trill* fully, especially the notion of rapid alternation.

(c) Parts (i) and (ii) were usually well answered while (iii) and (iv) resulted in many laborious, if ultimately correct descriptions. In (iii) some confused clarinets 7-10 with bars 7-10.

(d) There were many good responses, revealing a sound grasp of the structures of both works.

Question 3

(a/b) There were few successful attempts to define *answer*, many candidates relating the term to antiphonal writing. *False relation* was often fully and correctly defined, though many candidates gave chromatic change in the same part as an example. *Hemiola* continues to pose significant difficulties, and elicited few full and correct accounts. *Plagal cadence*, however, was usually correctly defined and located.

(c) Answers to (i) and (ii) were surprisingly weak, with suspension frequently given for one, and dominant omitted for the other. There were few full answers to (iii), many candidates failing to notice that the two lines outlined the same range of notes. In (iv), few gave precise details of key, but (v) was usually successfully answered.

(d) Circumstances of performance were usually correctly given. The structure of the Gabrieli proved problematic for many, and few gave details of the way the music cadences on different steps of the scale. In most instances, candidates usually gained more marks for their descriptions of the structure of the Brahms (unless they thought it was in sonata form). Some experienced difficulty in giving precise bar-numbers, and again few offered a detailed commentary on the tonal scheme.

Question 4

(a/b) *Chromatic scale* was particularly popular. Most candidates managed to define this and other chosen terms successfully. But the *development section* was not always accurately located, however.

(c) Parts (i), (ii) and (iii) were usually well answered, though some candidates had not noticed the reversal of beats 3 and 4 in bar 4. There were few full answers to (iv), the presence of *stretto* in bars 70-73 frequently unmentioned.

(d) Candidates usually answered more successfully on instrumentation and structure than rhythm (especially in the Sweelinck).

Question 5

(a/b) *Dominant pedal* and *monophonic* were the most frequently defined. As usual, a large number of candidates neglected to remark on the presence of changing harmonies over the pedal, and some robbed themselves of credit by defining *monophonic* successfully, only to follow it with 'sometimes accompanied'. *Hocket* was rarely attempted; *appoggiatura* was usually correctly defined in either form given in the scheme, and also successfully located.

(c) Parts (i) to (iii) were usually answered correctly, but (iv) and (v) were often only partially complete. Very few provided the full, correct answer to (vi).

(d) There were many good responses to this question. Weaker responses were usually characterised by absence of information on Gabrieli, even on textural matters.

Question 6

(a/b) *Perfect cadence* and *syllabic* were the overwhelming favourites, though *tritone* and *vocalisation*, if selected, were usually correctly defined and located.

(c) (i) Baroque was usually given, but instead of functional harmony, many candidates gave diatonic or periodic phrasing. Part (ii) was usually correct, but (iii) rarely elicited any useful information. A surprising number did not know the term required in (iv), and had to resort to longwinded descriptions of the device. Only a few candidates could describe the differences required in part (v) with ease and clarity.

(d) Responses tended to be more precise and detailed on performance circumstances and melody than phrase-structure. Many candidates failed to restrict their comments on texture to the accompanying instrument.

Question 7

(a/b) There seemed to be no preference for terms in this question. *Tonic pedal* definitions usually lacked mention of changing harmonies, otherwise candidates responded successfully for the most part.

(c) In part (i), candidates appeared to find it difficult to isolate both of the obvious recurring features, usually failing to mention the recurrence of the sustained note. As in Question 1, answers tended to focus on instrumentation rather than pitch differences. Parts (ii), (iii) and (iv) were answered more successfully.

(d) Performing forces were usually described successfully, though some candidates continue to write out lists of instruments without making the vital, mark-earning comment. Comments on melody ranged from the full and accurate to merely noting which instrument had the melody line. Textural comments were sometimes excellent; but in weaker responses, there were frequent signs of difficulty in distinguishing between various types of homophony and counterpoint.

Question 8

(a/b) *Scotch snap* was very rarely attempted, and *comping* proved less popular than might have been expected. *Diminished seventh* was often confused with anything marked 7, though many candidates were aware that it consisted of minor thirds. Initially correct *tierce de picardie* definitions were often undermined by the fatal catch-all 'or vice versa'.

(c) Answers to part (i) were surprisingly weak, many candidates exhibiting little awareness of the special circumstances surrounding the recording of this number. In (ii), candidates usually succeeded in picking out some of the more superficial details, but few showed a clear understanding of the change in phrase structure, or the difference resulting from the high and low Gs. Parts (iii) - (iv) were usually correctly answered.

(d) This question was generally well answered, many candidates showing a good understanding of the differences in approach to melody writing. Grasp of tonality was sometimes insecure, however, with some assuming that both pieces were in the same key.

Question 9

So few candidates attempted this question, it is impossible to comment usefully in detail.

Advice to Candidates: Know your terminology (see the preface to this examiners' report), focus on the demands of the question, substantiate your observations, and when preparing for the exam, try to ensure that you can cope well with *both* areas of study you are tackling.

Composition (6704/41)

The overall standard of work was similar to that of last year, the mean mark being 72.4 (out of 120) in 2006 and 72.8 in 2007. The paper continues to be chosen by candidates who feel confident with composition, and this is reflected in more candidates achieving marks for their pieces in the 50+ mark band than in Paper 22. In keeping with previous years, the balance between the two pieces in the folio continues to be unequal. For many candidates one piece gains quite a high mark whilst the other gains only a moderate one. As a consequence, very high marks of 110+ tend to be rare.

Film and television retained its position as the most popular topic (21%) with popular song second (20%) and romantic miniatures third (13%). Variations (8%) has dropped considerably from its one-time favourite position and has been overtaken by neo-classicism and fusions (both 11%) and post modernism (10%). Club dance represents 2% of the submissions. This was surprisingly down this year given the sharp increase in these pieces for Paper 22. Music theatre, despite being a small entry (4%), has maintained its position as a relatively high-achieving topic.

The split between the two areas of work - popular and traditional styles - is, at 60 : 40, the same as for Paper 22. However, the difference in candidate performance between the more traditional topics and the studio-based work is more obvious, with more candidates achieving marks in the 40-49 and 50+ mark bands for the more traditional topics. For example, 80% of those offering romantic miniatures achieved more than half marks and 33% achieved more than 40/60. The spread of marks for popular song was widest and had a mean mark slightly lower than for other topics.

Comments on individual topics

Many comments and observations are similar to those of Paper 22.

Examiners commented that film music commentaries were often inadequate. In Paper 41 this topic is occasionally used as a convenient pigeonhole for a second piece, often with no firm link to the film and TV media; indeed, the instances of unsuitable pieces being submitted as film music was felt by examiners to have increased slightly this year, examples including sets of serial variations, pop songs and club dance tracks.

There was an increase in the number of instrumentals submitted under the popular song topic. These were not jazz compositions as in previous years, but guitar-based rock. Alongside this there was an increase in the number of scores in tablature. These scores were frequently not detailed with no rhythmic information.

Romantic miniatures, neo-classicism and post modernism continue to be the topics of choice for the stronger candidate, and folios consisting of pairs of these topics are common. Work is of a high standard and covers a range of compositional styles and techniques, the candidates being generally confident in their handling of harmony, part writing and structural coherence.

Comments on the assessment criteria

Unbalanced folios (i.e. with one very long and one very short piece) tend to be a problem with this paper, but less so this year. Centres are reminded that the six-minute requirement is not marked a single package - pieces are assessed individually

and on their own merits. Whilst there is some flexibility, candidates should aim to produce two three-minute pieces.

As with Paper 22, presentation continues to be a cause of lost marks. Many candidates seem intent on producing an impeccable folio, with photographs and binding and word-processed commentaries, but containing scores with hardly any performance detail at all. This is a pity, because it is the score, not the commentary, that is assessed.

Students are more secure in their handling of resources than they are with Paper 22. Writing is more idiomatic and there are fewer misjudgements. Nonetheless, many students rely on MIDI timbres and computer mixing for balancing ensembles and there are frequently discrepancies between what is indicated in the score and what would be practical in a live setting.

The mark for coherence applies to overall structural unity as well as to bar-by-bar progression. When pieces fail to gain a high mark here it is usually because they lack a firm sense of direction; either the candidate is mesmerised by detail, so that the piece seems to go round in circles, or they provide too much contrast, so that the piece lacks focus.

Administration

As in previous years, there were instances of composition folios being sent to the recital examiner and vice versa. Centres with candidates doing Papers 41 and 42 are asked to double-check before posting. Packing was more secure this year with fewer cases of CDs broken in transit.

Recital (6704/42)

Approximately three quarters of the candidates chose to take the recital option and, for the second year running, there has been a small improvement in the overall standard achieved. The mean mark increased slightly from 17.6 in 2006 to 17.9 in 2007 and this was almost entirely due to a rise at the top of the ability range where more candidates achieved final marks above 22 out of 25 - at the expense of those in the 19 - 21 mark band. There was no change in the proportion of candidates achieving marks in each of the different holistic mark categories below 19.

As always, the vast majority of candidates submit work at the more difficult level and this year there was evidence that the more able candidates were choosing repertoire which they could play accurately and musically under the stressful conditions of a twenty minute public recital. It has been a recurrent theme of these examiner reports in previous years that many candidates have jeopardised their chances of a high mark in this paper by performing pieces which are too difficult, and it was good to see an improvement in this regard this year. It is not the Board's intention to stifle candidates' ambitions, nor to discourage them from tackling exciting and demanding repertoire, nonetheless it is important that they are guided by their teachers to be realistic about what they can expect to perform securely by the time of the recital.

Singing continues its upward trend of being the most popular medium for the recital, and it is to be hoped that the comments about the assessment of vocal recitals (written about at some length in the 2006 report) were helpful for those candidates singing this year. 24% of this year's recitals were vocal and there was a notable rise (36% as opposed to 25% in 2006) in the numbers achieving marks in the 'first class work' mark band. 24% of recitals were woodwind (8% flute, 8% clarinet, 6% saxophone, 1% oboe, 1% bassoon), 16% piano, 11% strings (6% violin, 3% violoncello, 1% viola, 1% double bass), 10% guitarists (both classical and electric), 7% brass (3% trumpet, 2% trombone, 1% french and tenor horns, 1% tuba and euphonium) and the other 8% included drum kit and orchestral percussion, organ and harp, accordion, bagpipes and a small number of candidates performing on two or more different instruments. These figures are almost unchanged from 2006.

The highest mark band was achieved by candidates on all of the standard instruments, although the proportion was significantly higher for violinists, violoncellists and oboists which to some extent dispels the notion that these instruments do not record well. A lower proportion of clarinettists achieved marks in the top band. At the opposite end of the spectrum, clarinettists and pianists accounted for almost half of the recitals deemed 'not to be of an acceptable standard at this level' (9 marks or below). Most frequently this was due to poor tone quality and weak intonation in the throat and top registers in the case of clarinettists, and a lack of fluency in the case of pianists.

As ever, good planning is the key to a successful result. Many centres use the time after the AS examinations in late June and July to start preparing for the recital, helping candidates with their choice of repertoire to create a thoughtful and imaginative programme, and one which is going to display their musical skills to best advantage.

One extra mark is available for recitals which show imagination in the choice of repertoire and where the programme notes are well written, offering a personal response to the music and showing links which demonstrate the coherence of the programme. Examples in 2007 included a programme of Preludes and Fugues by Bach

and Mendelssohn where the candidate succinctly demonstrated the connections and contrasts between the two works, another piano recital which featured dance movements by Handel, Chopin, Christopher Norton and Paul Harvey with interesting comparisons made relating to the rhythmical characteristics of the pieces, and a flute recital featuring movements by Reinecke, Ravel, Hindemith, Mathias and Foss with clear links being drawn in the development of flute writing during that period.

Those recitals which the examiner considers to be a haphazard assortment of unrelated pieces will attract a deduction of one mark if the programme notes make no attempt to explain the link between the pieces and the order of performance. It is not acceptable merely to state that these are the candidate's favourite works, or that the pieces cover as wide a range of styles as is possible in a twenty minute recital. A chronological programme that demonstrates the development of the instrument through the last three or four centuries is perfectly acceptable, but will not in itself gain the extra mark unless the candidate is able to show aspects of this development clearly in the notes. Candidates with a larger repertoire who plan their recital early in the year are inevitably likely to perform better than those who leave the choice, and practising, of the programme until close to the May deadline.

One other point which is worth bearing in mind when planning the music for the recital is the application of difficulty levels. Edexcel publishes on its website the current difficulty level booklet which examiners use for assessing the difficulty levels of the pieces performed. This includes all the most common instruments taken from the recent syllabuses of the Associated Board, Trinity Guildhall and the London College of Music. Where a candidate plays more than one movement from a Sonata, Concerto or Suite, then the highest difficulty level of any of the movements applies to all the movements performed. For instance, a flautist might perform all the movements of Rutter's Suite Antique and the whole work would be deemed to be more difficult even though some of the movements are only Grade 5 level. This strategy could be helpful for a candidate who has played the Waltz for Grade 8, but is better suited performing technically less demanding lyrical pieces.

Administrative aspects of the recital paper continue to improve, and examiners were pleased to be able to report on fewer instances of poor recordings, bad accompanying, short recitals and editing, all of which have been apparent in previous years. Improved technology has supported the work in most centres with the majority of submissions now on CD with clearly labelled tracks and showing a good balance of soloist and accompaniment. There was little evidence of centres using cassette tapes, rewritable CDs or minidisks in long-play mode. In a small minority of centres, editing was evident (both blatant and surreptitious) and in all cases the candidate's work was reported as a specification infringement. There were still examples of candidates performing to no discernible audience. It is a specification requirement that candidates perform to the teacher and at least one other person, although it is hoped that most candidates will want to display their work to a wider number of supporters. Evidence of the audience's presence should be clear on the recording.

Two problems which continue to arise tend to apply primarily to candidates performing in rock styles. These were noted in last year's report and are repeated here for reinforcement. First is the issue of ensemble performance. The specification requires that the candidate should have the 'dominant solo role throughout the performance'. In recitals where this was not the case, the examiner awarded no marks. Candidates are at liberty to play with a backing track or with a supporting band, but it is essential that the performance is a solo one and not a band performance with some solos. Secondly, there was still evidence this year of candidates downloading scores of their songs after the recital had been recorded. Often these scores bore little relation to the music performed, except for the title.

Not only was the musical detail inadequate, but also often the structure of the performance was significantly different. In these instances, the candidate scored little credit for accuracy. Candidates must understand that they are required to submit an accurate score, in notation, tab or chord chart, and this needs to be planned for at an early stage in the course. It is not acceptable to provide a sample recording in lieu. In improvised performances, a lead sheet, or detailed stimulus is necessary, and an account of the structure desirable.

Examiners thank candidates and their teachers for the many excellent and exciting recitals which were heard this year. Their efforts are much appreciated, as was often evident from the prolonged applause at the end of the performances.

Compositional Techniques (6705/51)

The general standard was much the same as last year as far as the majority of candidates was concerned. However, there was perhaps a longer tail, with some of the weaker candidates achieving lower marks than their counterparts in previous years.

The Bach Chorale option remains much the most popular question on the Paper, very understandably, but the range of marks here was very wide indeed. The second most popular topic appears now to be Serialism.

This Report examines the various options separately but it is worth stating here that in too many cases valuable marks are lost by poor Presentation. The most common pitfalls in this respect vary from one question to another but greater precision in notation and greater care over the appearance of manuscripts would not only mean higher marks but would often convey candidates' intentions more clearly to the examiner.

The administration of the exam seems to have run smoothly but there have been several cases where some malpractice was suspected and these are being pursued by the Compliance Department. The conditions under which the exam is taken vary from one centre to another - necessarily if candidates are to have access to a keyboard as the rules allow. However, centres should be on their guard against possible collusion under these circumstances or, worse, actual assistance to candidates.

Ai: Baroque Counterpoint

Many of the candidates who chose this option achieved a reasonable standard of competence in the realisation of the given figuring, though other technical faults, including parallel and exposed octaves and fifths, were often apparent. Not all candidates seemed to know how to use sevenths appropriately in this style. There were too many submissions with awkward leaps to a seventh or unsuitable progressions from a seventh, including dominant sevenths.

A secure technique is only part of the answer in this question, however. Many scripts needed much more attention to the construction of a purposeful and shapely melodic line. This needs to create an appropriate rhythmic counterpoint with the bass line.

Aii: Minimalism

The stimulus provided much excellent material for candidates to manipulate, perhaps for some an overwhelming amount. Certainly, there were many attempts that seemed to focus much more heavily on the figures of the first two bars than on the various possibilities of the third and fourth bars. Those candidates who tried to make something of the descending chromatic bass line here were able to produce a more balanced construction than those who neglected this material. Much more might have been made of the 3/4 - 6/8 dichotomy in the stimulus, though it has to be said also that there was quite a lot of confusion in rhythmic notation in the compound time sections.

Bi: Bach Chorale

The first cadence appeared to cause problems for many candidates who either failed to see the logic of the passing notes at the end of the given passage or who fell into the trap of using the same bass note from weak to strong at this point. A few candidates even experimented with dominant ninths here! A straightforward plagal cadence in D was Bach's preferred choice in all three of his harmonisations that appear in Riemenschneider. It was possible also to construct a reasonably satisfactory perfect cadence in A major but this had the disadvantage of coming too early in the chorale and would be followed by an immediate return to the tonic. There was in any case an obvious place for a cadence in the dominant later in the chorale.

The fourth cadence also presented difficulties. Few candidates realised that the second quaver on the first beat of the bar required separate harmonisation but Bach's treatment here reveals a wider range of possibilities.

Another problem for some candidates was the generally high tessitura of the soprano part. This resulted in many losing marks for poor spacing, particularly at the second cadence. The secret was to score the inner parts in a high register also or to place the seventh in II7b and its resolution on to the leading note in the tenor part rather than the alto.

Bii: 32-Bar Pop Song

Realisation was usually reasonably well done, though there were in some scripts rather too many incorrect or missing accidentals. The choice of harmonic scheme is also the responsibility of the candidate in this Paper, unlike Paper 21, and few were able to present really convincing schemes that additionally showed flair and imagination. More fluency in basic harmony would help weaker candidates in this aspect of the question.

There is also much more scope in this question for melodic and rhythmic creativity than most candidates seem to realise - indeed, the marking scheme makes it clear that this is expected. It is not enough merely to recycle the figures of the given material and in rhythmic patterns particularly candidates should show some ability to innovate suitably.

Ci: Renaissance Counterpoint

The number of candidates choosing this option remains very small though there was a tiny increase on the numbers for the last two years. Those who attempted it mostly displayed a good level of basic competence, including word treatment, but it was surprising how few candidates found the best solutions as regards imitative points, even though these were highly regular. There were many submissions, too, which lacked the expected suspensions at the two main cadences in the extract.

Cii: Serialism

The fragmentary, agitated, nature of the stimulus did not seem to be appreciated as much as was hoped. This led some candidates to change the tempo marking and other performance directions in ways which were not obviously compatible with the raw material of the opening. Where candidates gave MM indications, these were sometimes very inappropriately chosen, both

for the character of the writing and for practical purposes, with some scores containing wildly unplayable passages.

Some candidates have clearly been strongly encouraged to use as many wide intervals as possible. Though the use of wide leaps is a feature of many twelve-tone works, it needs, like any other aspect of musical style, to be kept in balance with other considerations. In the worst examples submitted, there were leaps of more than two octaves between almost every note, often in very short note values, even in demisemiquavers. Some candidates became so carried away by the pursuit of the large interval that they forgot that most instruments have limitations of range, so losing valuable marks for out of range notes. This applied to instruments as varied as the piccolo, alto saxophone and xylophone.

The marking scheme emphasises that the aim must be for a musical response. The more that candidates write what they can adequately hear, or even play, and write for instruments with which they are familiar, the more likely they are to achieve that kind of result.

Di: Extended Instrumental Techniques

At the time of writing there had been just five scripts this year. Some of these showed evidence of study of the music of Berio and Cage but there was little real creativity and certainly very little development of the stimulus. Indeed in four cases the given material was used only once - as individual notes with no specific rhythms. The marking scheme makes it clear that the Ideas component, out of 10, is based exclusively on the handling of the chosen stimulus in respect of the musical outcome.

Some candidates lost marks through weak or careless Presentation. Both tempo markings and dynamic indications were missing from some scores.

Dii: Electro-acoustic Music

The entries were again mostly of a rather mediocre standard. Candidates sometimes produced some interesting sounds but seemed unaware of the need fully to integrate the ostinato into their music. Marks for Ideas will be higher both if there is some real connection between the added track and the ostinato and if the ostinato itself has been manipulated in some way. The score ought to show clearly the relationship between the ostinato and added sounds and how this works over the time of the performance

Performing during the course (6705/52)

The recorded solo performances showed a very wide range of performing styles and abilities across the full range of instruments, and the logged ensembles were a testament to the wealth of musical activity available in centres. Many candidates demonstrated an ability to perform across a vast spectrum of repertoire, often logging ambitious orchestral works alongside choral items and rock band performances. There were almost no instances of candidates being unable to fulfil the requirements of four performances, and it was clear that many candidates had been able to select from a much larger list of pieces.

The standards of performance of the recorded solo were similar to those in 2006. There were many excellent performances, and it was noted that some candidates played the single recorded solo much more effectively than the music in their 20 minute recital for Paper 42. However, there was evidence that some candidates put all their best pieces in the recital and under-performed on this paper, perhaps leaving the recording of this solo until very close to the May deadline. This year, moderators were able to cross-check more easily between papers 42 and 52 to ensure that different material was being presented. In the rare cases of duplication appropriate action was taken.

It is worth repeating the point made in the 2006 report that a secure performance (14-15 out of 25) must be secure with no significant weaknesses, and a successful interpretation must start with a faithful adherence to the musical details given by the composer, such as dynamics, articulation and tempo markings. Frequently moderators would disagree with the high marks awarded by teacher-examiners because the candidate had been cavalier with one or more of these details. Specifically, the performance must be played at, or near, the correct speed to be deemed 'competent' (6 marks for accuracy). Whilst moderators will not expect candidates to keep to precise metronome markings, a movement marked *Vivace* must be lively. There is no time requirement for the solo, but the piece should be long enough for the candidate to demonstrate good musical interpretation, but not so long that mistakes creep in. Moderators will only listen to the first five minutes of the solo performance.

Some candidates failed to supply an adequate written score of the recorded solo. This should be either a fully notated score, or a chord chart or lead sheet, or the stimulus for an improvisation. A score downloaded from another artist's website after the recording has been made may or may not be an accurate version of what the candidate actually played. A sample recording from another artist is not acceptable. Candidates should perform the composition in full, and not a simplified version in order to receive full credit. Improvised performances are judged on the quality of the improvisation (as detailed in the marking grids for improvised performances - page 45 of the specification) and also the technical and musical quality of the performance, including aspects of tone quality and dynamic control.

The commentaries and marking by teacher-examiners showed some improvement, although there are still many giving very unrealistic assessments. It would be good practice for centres to ensure that at least two teachers listen to the recordings and discuss the marks to be awarded, possibly combining with another local centre where a teacher has been delivering the specification on his or her own. Comments made in previous reports still apply, and it is worth reiterating that teachers should listen to the recordings and mark these as objectively as possible in relation to the marking grids rather than the live performances. It is in the marking of the recorded solo that the moderation of the paper is effected. Unrealistically high marking here significantly jeopardises the marks awarded to the candidates on the paper as a whole. There continues to be a significant minority of centres where candidates marks are adjusted by 10 marks or more.

This year, centres downloaded the MA52 forms from the Edexcel website. Moderators were especially grateful to those teachers who photocopied the forms in an A3 format, inserting the candidate's music inside the form. Where the four pages were simply stapled or clipped together there were instances where the music and forms became detached, which caused considerable difficulties for moderators with larger centres. The details on the forms were generally fully completed, although in some cases the teacher had not made it clear whether performances were solos or ensembles. Details of the logged ensembles were also sometimes sketchy. In order that the moderator can award the correct marks it is essential that full information is provided. In particular, it is necessary to know whether a complete work has been performed, or just a single movement, in order to clarify the difficulty level. Moderators would be glad of more supporting evidence in the commentaries for the assessment of the difficulty levels. Where a candidate offers four performances, two of which are at S level and two at MD, then it will be the relative lengths of the four performances which determines whether the overall difficulty level should be S or MD.

Recording quality continues to improve, although there were still instances where the candidate's part was overwhelmed by the accompaniment. There were particular instances of candidates performing concerto movements with their school orchestra where the positioning of the microphone rendered the soloist's part almost inaudible. Poor quality pianos, and the tuning of pianos, was an issue in some centres, and candidates are encouraged to listen to the recordings of their performances before signing the declaration on the back of the MA52 form. Moderators are, however, very grateful for the considerable care and attention that teachers in centres give to the complicated and time-consuming procedures for submissions on this paper.

Listening (6706/61)

Question 1 (a) was generally well answered. Part (b) was less well answered, and part (c) was poorly answered, although many spotted Brahms as the composer. Question 1 was felt by examiners to be one of the weakest sections on the paper, even though the genres were very accessible and the excerpts very typical. Several examiners wondered how much extended listening was being undertaken by candidates.

Responses to Question 2 were disappointing. In part (a) few achieved four out of four, some struggling with (i) and (iv). Most achieved three out of four in (b) with 'bassoon' being the most popular wrong answer. Part (c) was well answered. Parts (d) and (e) were very successfully answered by many candidates, and examiners particularly commented on the musical perception and appropriate use of terminology from most candidates this year, although discussion of melody alone proved problematic, as in Paper 31. In (f) most found an appropriate composer, 1770s was the most popular but not entirely accurate decade; the genre of work was often less than well identified.

There was greater evidence that some candidates were not leaving enough time to complete Question 3. Several scripts were blank for large parts of this question, losing a significant number of marks, and these scripts could only achieve low marks.

In Question 3 very few attempted all of the first three sections, of which only two are required. Part (a) was better done than previously, (b) was well done by most, the semiquavers at the end of the first bar causing the greatest problems. Part (c) was mainly well done, although 4.5 was a frequent mark, with candidates missing the C# and D. There were mixed responses to (d), with few of them really good. Part (e) was very well tackled, and most candidates had some success in describing important aspects of the music they were hearing. In (f) most candidates found some if not all of the appropriate contextual answers.

In general, this year's paper appears to have been tackled by candidates with confidence and accuracy, producing some high overall marks at the top end and allowing all candidates to show some breadth of knowledge.

Musical Understanding (Anthology) (6706/62)

It is pleasing to report that there was an improvement in performance this year, with many more candidates gaining marks in the higher ranges. Middle-range performances were typically marked by unbalanced responses with sometimes quite marked variations from one question to another. Weaker responses were often marked by irrelevance and misunderstandings of musical terminology. In this connection, students are referred to the list of terms included in the preface to this examiners' report.

Candidates should ensure that they are able to comment on relevant aspects throughout the work, and not just its opening bars. Many marks were lost because of a failure to follow a particular process through to the end. Candidates are also reminded that additional marks are not given for repeating the same information.

Though there were clear indications that candidates were better prepared this year, there were still wide differences in the standard of presentation. Many candidates wrote admirably clearly and fluently in Section B, using continuous prose as required. Regrettably, many others produced untidy or poorly presented work, seemingly indicating a lack of practice in the writing of essays.

On the other hand, it has to be said that there is a tendency to write at excessive length in Section A (where note form answers are acceptable).

There were very few rubric infringements, the commonest being the answering of all three parts of Section A questions.

The following remarks are intended to offer a brief and constructive summary of the response of this year's candidature.

Section A

Question 1: Music for Large Ensemble

(a) There were many excellent responses to this question, with full, detailed descriptions of the way in which Wagner extended the initial melody line. The weaker answers suffered from lack of detail (some going no further than naming leitmotifs), a tendency to fall back on book-learned analysis (i.e. cells x, y and z without describing or locating them fully), or else confusing the melody line with other strands of the texture.

(b) Candidates showed a clear understanding of the ways Wagner increased tension in this passage. Some found it difficult to describe the rising scales in the violin parts adequately. Others digressed to plot analysis.

(c) Some good responses, though middle-range candidates needed to relate dominant sevenths to changing tonalities.

Question 2: 20th-century Art Music

- (a) Some full accounts. Lower-scoring candidates tended not to note the finer details.
- (b) Less observant candidates failed to notice that the question concerned the live clarinet part, and wrote at length about how the texture builds up in general.
- (c) Generally, this question was well answered, though many candidates failed to remark on the changing chords in the lower clarinet parts of the Reich, or to provide specific identifications of chords in Shostakovich.

Question 3: Music for Small Ensemble

- (a) There was a surprisingly weak response, with very little focus on instrumental techniques.
- (b) There were a number of very good, full responses, but also many who tended to write more about tonality and modulation than Brahms's harmonic vocabulary.
- (c) There was generally a rather disappointing response. Most candidates noticed the broad repetitions of the Trio's main melody, and traced it back to material in the Scherzo, but relatively few wrote about the devices Brahms used to extend the original line, e.g. sequence, repetition, diminution.

Question 4: Keyboard Music

- (a) Responses tended to lack sufficient detail for high marks, and there was much aimless description.
- (b) This was generally well handled, with many candidates gaining full marks.
- (c) This question was also well tackled in the main, though some candidates failed to employ sufficient detail, e.g. describing Sweelinck's descending stepwise line spanning a fourth misleadingly as a descending fourth.

Question 5: Sacred Vocal Music

- (a) Weaker candidates were clearly unfamiliar with the essential differences between Renaissance and Baroque music, attributing the various techniques used by Gabrieli to the wrong period.
- (b) This question was generally well answered, although there were few full descriptions of the initial chord progressions.
- (c) Textures were usually tackled with more confidence than the harmonic techniques.

Question 6: Secular Vocal Music

- (a) Generally approached correctly; candidates usually managed texture and tonality better than rhythm.
- (b) Often well answered, though few attempted to describe the chromatic chords.
- (c) Candidates usually found the Fauré more difficult to cope with than the Dowland and Haydn, most responses including mention of the falling tears and the sobs, and the 'poor fit' of verse 2 in the Haydn.

Question 7: Music for Film and Television

- (a) Generally well answered, the less satisfactory answers failing to name tonal centres in the later stages of the work.
- (b) Some very good answers, showing a clear understanding of the extent to which Goldsmith drew on serial techniques. Few were unable to locate the tone row at bb. 8-9.
- (c) This question met with some disorderly responses. Weaker candidates tended to grasp at trivial details of instrumentation, while missing the broader points.

Question 8: Popular Music and Jazz

- (a) Some very good responses. Pleasingly, there were very few attempts to answer the question by reeling off chord names read, without further comment, from the score.
- (b) Responses were not generally so orderly, and there was a tendency to repeat basic information.
- (c) Apart from difficulties in distinguishing between homophony and counterpoint for some candidates, this question was generally well answered.

Question 9: World Music

The few scripts seen showed evidence of sound work and preparation.

Section B

Question 10: Music for Large Ensemble

Generally (a) was better answered than (b)

- (a) There was evidence of good preparation and an ability to navigate the scores of both works. Weaker answers tended not to draw attention to tonal changes in the later stages of the Debussy. Candidates usually kept to the point in this answer.

(b) Here, however, there was frequent irrelevance, with digressions into modulation and tonality. Answers to this question tended to have a less orderly approach, and there was much random referencing. Most candidates noted the modality of the Tippett, but failed to show how it impinged on the harmonic writing.

Question 11: 20th-century Art Music

(a) There were few well-focused remarks on metre, though the rhythmic aspects were reasonably well tackled. Candidates were well prepared to deal with the micro-macrocosmic aspects of the Cage in Sonata I, but few investigated Sonatas II and III.

(b) Description of timbre in Webern were usually fairly orderly, though surprisingly few dealt with such textural details as the canons and cantus firmus. Remarks on the Cage were usually confined to texture and a 'general terms' description of the effects of preparation. Few gave details of the specific effects certain mutings had. Similarly, remarks on Berio's extended vocal techniques were rather generalised.

Question 12: Music for Small Ensemble

Some full, excellent responses in terms of detail. The best answers also mounted an effective argument regarding the link between the development of functional tonality and the composition of longer works.

Question 13: Keyboard Music

(a) The question was clearly understood, but few went beyond the listing of dissonances for each composer, the presence of streams of unprepared and unresolved dissonances in Debussy usually going unremarked.

(b) There was a reasonable quantity of basic fact given in most responses, but frequently these essays were rather directionless, with little true comparison.

Question 14: Sacred Vocal Music

Option (a) was by far the more popular, and was generally very well answered. Responses to (b) were often full and relevant, but more could have been made of the nature of Stravinsky's contrasting approach.

Question 15: Secular Vocal Music

Relatively few answers to these questions have been seen, and on the basis of this very limited sample, neither option was answered particularly well, though the question in each case was clearly understood.

Question 16: Music for Film and Television

Option (b) proved to be the more popular, and was generally answered in some detail, and, in the best responses, with a clear understanding of the intentions of each composer.

In (a), the music to Titanic was usually better described. Pheloung's rather amorphous score caused many problems for candidates anxious to apply standard textural terms without qualification.

Question 17: Popular Music and Jazz

Candidates who answered option (b) on harmony usually fared better than those who attempted to write on melody in (a). Melody continues to cause difficulties for those candidates who find it difficult to focus on specifically melodic issues, e.g. key, range, shape of line.

Question 18: World Music

Too few pieces of work have been seen for any trends to be discerned.

Last, but no means least - teachers and candidates are to be congratulated for their work this year. For advice to future candidates: please refer to the closing remarks in the section on Paper 32.

Grade Boundaries

6701

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	38	34	30	26	22
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

6702

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	180	134	121	108	96	84
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

6703

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	105	70	62	54	47	40
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

6704 (option 1)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	100	72	64	56	48	40
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

6704 (option 2)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	100	76	68	60	52	44
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

6705

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	85	67	59	52	45	38
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

6706

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	120	84	73	62	51	40
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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