

CCEA GCSE Music
(Summer Series) 2011

Chief Examiner's and Principal Moderator's Report

music

Foreword

This booklet contains the Chief Examiner's/Principal Moderator Report for CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Music from the Summer Series 2011.

CCEA's examining teams produce these detailed reports outlining the performance of candidates in all aspects of the qualification in this series. These reports allow the examining team an opportunity to promote best practice and offer helpful hints whilst also presenting a forum to highlight any areas for improvement.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner/Principal Moderator Reports will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This report forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk

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GCSE MUSIC

Chief Examiner's Report

This was the first year of assessment in the new CCEA GCSE Music specification and although the practical examination remained virtually the same as before, there were some changes to the administration and marking of the Composition element. Whenever a specification changes, teachers may be somewhat apprehensive about the look, content and scope of the papers. We tried to make sure that the types of questions used in the previous specification were being used again, so as to preserve continuity from one programme to the other.

The main 'change' of course, was the introduction of a second paper and also the provision of choice for candidates as to which options they would prefer to study.

Once again we hoped that the choices of 'unseen' music would help make the papers an enjoyable experience for the candidates.

The mix of questions in various styles within both papers discriminated well over the wide range of abilities, and again a large percentage of candidates achieved high marks – a tribute to the excellent standards and dedication of teachers in schools.

Listening and Appraising

This year's papers followed the pattern of previous years, with a mix of different types of questions reflecting the full depth and breadth of the syllabus. The examining team felt that all questions differentiated well, and none were outside the scope of the syllabus. The musical themes provided in the final extract added an extra differentiation, which was necessary as the other questions were more straightforward and approachable.

There are still some recurring matters which cause us concern which need mentioning once again this year.

Examination Technique Guidance

There are some matters which caused concern that the senior team feel need to be addressed by centres, if their candidates are not to lose valuable marks:

- A large number of candidates failed to correctly spell the *names* of set works and their *composers*. The team would consider, 'developing knowledge... through a study of...', to include correct naming and spelling of composers and their works, a key learning outcome after two year's study.
- Too many candidates still rely on vague generalisations, sprinkling answers with musical terms such as *repetition*, *sequence*, *imitation*, *homophonic*, *polyphonic*, or phrases such as *there are lots of*, *walking* 'word painting' or *terraced dynamics*, without referring to specific points in the music or the supplied texts.
- Comparison questions where the rubric clearly indicates reference must be made to **each** performance, continue to lose valuable marks for candidates. It is insufficient to state that *Performance A has... and B doesn't*. Candidates need to state precisely what both performances have in order to gain marks.

- ‘Level’ questions are not part of the new specification, and it is therefore important for candidates to note how many marks are awarded in sub-sections of questions. These give clear indications of the numbers of points expected to gain full marks.
- We would like to remind candidates to be as clear as possible in their presentation, preferably using ink, writing legibly and making any notation or figures clear – particularly their school and candidate numbers. Red ink and correcting fluid should not be used.
- Identifying instruments or sections of the orchestra is the single largest contributor to lost marks in Part one of the test.
- **Reading** the question carefully is also a key priority for candidates. Valuable marks were lost giving answers which the question did not require, for example Q1, 3(a), 4(b), 6(b) etc.

Part 1 Listening and Appraising

Introduction and Format

Part One of the Listening and Appraising Test, focused on the core Area of Study, ‘Repeated Patterns in Music’. Five questions featured a mixture of music known to candidates through a study of a series of set works and unfamiliar music related to this Area of Study. Q6 was a ‘music industry’ question. The timing of the paper was 45 minutes for completion, with 5 minutes reading time before and after the examination. Initial feedback from centres indicated that, considering the demand of writing required, there was, on balance, sufficient time between individual playings and also between questions. The time permitted to complete Q6 was five minutes, which equated fairly to the time allocation for each of the other five questions.

Rationale and Accessibility

Part One was a mix of questions reflecting the full depth and breadth of the core Area of Study. It featured a range of analytical, factual, short and more extended questions and those requiring expression of opinion and justification. The examining team felt that all questions differentiated well, and none were outside the scope of the specification. The paper was accessible to all candidates, with opportunity to score well on set work questions and for the more able candidates to be stretched. A small number of misinterpretations of question rubric did arise.

Application of Success Criteria

Examination Paper Part 1

Q1 **Beethoven: Symphony No. 7, Allegretto; 4:56 – 6:03**

Choosing a set work as a first question was designed to give a boost to candidate confidence and so it proved.

- (a) (i) Some candidates noted the *pedal* instruments, **not** the *melody* instruments in the opening bars, misreading the question.

- (ii) The term 'riff' was the most common incorrect answer. Candidates should be made aware that 'riff' is, almost exclusively, a 20th/21st century term used in rock/popular music.
- (b) The rhythm outline was well identified.
- (c) This was less well answered with too many 'generalities'. This part of the question differentiated well. There is no 'timpani roll' in this extract, incorrectly noted by many candidates.
- (d) Three marks were easily gained in the majority of cases.

Q2 Extract A: 'Palladio' (Jenkins); 0:00 – 1:00

- (a) (i) There was some confusion evident in naming the 'rhythmic device'. Identifying musical devices, musical elements, tonalities and structures is a learning outcome outlined in the specification.
- (ii) Initial feedback indicated that some candidates cited the poor quality of the extract. This extract was the first of only **two** 'live' recordings used in Part One. It was taken from a S4C recording of Catrin Finch. It was felt by the team that the timbre of the other instruments on the list of choices would point in the direction of tambourine, rather than the triangle. (See Examination Technique Guidance bullet point 5 above).
- (iii) The majority of candidates chose the correct time signature.

Extract B: 'Viva la Vida' (Coldplay); 0:00 – 1:00

- (b) (i) This question was generally well answered. 'Four times' was the most frequent incorrect answer.
- (ii) Many answers failed to focus on the chordal, syncopated nature of the ostinato but majority of candidates gained at least one of the two available marks.

Extract C: 'Praeludium' (Jarnefelt); 0:00 – 1:00

- (c) (i)– (ii) Most candidates gained full marks in this question, correctly stating the opening dynamic and then highlighting a gradation later in the extract.

Q3 Jenkins: 'Requiem, 'Dies Irae'; 0:00 – 2:00

- (a) (i) This question was well answered although again, valuable marks were lost by mentioning non *percussion* instruments. Additionally, the ethnic percussion instruments are only used in the 'haiku' sections of the work.
- (ii) This question was well answered.
- (b) Some candidates focused on the 'meaning' of the text in lines 1 and 2, instead of outlining the musical features which exist. Minority of candidates gained full marks here. Feedback suggested that the addition of 'musical' to the word 'setting' could have avoided any confusion. It is, however, clear that this part of the question differentiated between candidates.

- (c) (i)– Most candidates provided correct answers to part (i) and (ii).
(ii)

Q4 **Extract A: Copland: *Fanfare for the Common Man*; 0:00 – 1:45**
**Extract B: Emerson, Lake & Palmer; *Fanfare for the Common Man*;
0:00 – 1:45**

The expectations of this question remain unaltered from the previous specification. The rubric was very clear that both performances had to be referred to, and it was insufficient to only mention negative comparison, for example, ‘A does... B doesn’t’.

It is envisaged that similar type questions will be used throughout the term of this new specification. It is therefore imperative that centres explain to candidates how best to gain marks.

The calibre of analytical detail required in this question provided the greatest differentiation in the whole of Part One of the examination.

- (a) The most frequent mistake occurred where the brass instrument was written in the line for the percussion, and vice versa.
- (b) There was a disappointing lack of musical detail and a plethora of non-sequitur comments given in response to this question. ‘Matching-up’ comments between the two extracts, in most cases, could not increase the marks awarded.
- (c) There are still too many candidates throwing away two ‘easy marks’ with non musical justifications.

Q5 **Pachelbel; *Canon in D*; 0.00 –2.20**

- (a) Traditionally, questions which have required reference to or annotation of a musical score, have been poorly answered. The removal of pitch or rhythm dictation from the specification, gave an opportunity to judge how well candidates could identify themes in staff notation. This part of the question gained the majority of candidates at least one mark. Many candidates had learned the letter names of the ground bass and gained full marks by circling those that were wrong. The theme was written in minims which made the note heads much clearer to identify.
- (b) This question was universally well answered.
- (c) (i)– Again well answered, yet it was very disappointing to see
(iii) features of Baroque music ‘churned out’ even though they did not apply directly to the extract, for example, ‘*harpsichord*’ and ‘*terraced dynamics*’. Candidates should also be discouraged from stating the obvious, for example, ‘*Pachelbel was a Baroque composer*’ unless such comments are supported with dates.

Q6 This question gained a sizeable number of marks for the majority of candidates, including the weakest. It was an opportunity for them to show their knowledge and expertise, even though this may have been lacking in the rest of the paper.

- (a) (i) Most candidates demonstrated comprehension of the stimulus text and the consequences arising from illegal downloads.

- (b) Frequent misreading of the question resulted in career paths **outside** of the **recording** industry being noted.
- (c) The vast majority of candidates gained between 3–4 marks in this section and for those who interpreted the question, ‘*how*’ rather than ‘*why*’ multimedia devices have changed the way we listen to music, the mark scheme provided sufficient scope for acceptable answers.
- (d) It was surprising how many candidates did not realise how heavily commercial radio stations rely on advertising as their principal source of income.

Examination Paper Part 2

Option 1 Musical Traditions in Ireland

Q1 Extract A: ‘Steadfast & True’ – Miller’s Hill Accordion Band

Answers were very good here. In Q1(a)(iv), a minority were unable to identify the ‘march’.

Extract B: ‘Le Rêve Passe’ – Ballygowan Flute Band

Most candidates gained full marks here.

Extract C: ‘Heights of Dargai’ – Ravara Pipe Band

- (i)– Invariably correct.
- (ii)
- (iii) Only a tiny percentage answered this correctly.

Q2 ‘Drowsy Maggie’ – The Chieftains

- (a) The title of the piece and the group performing were identified by most candidates.
- (b) Although many answered this question correctly many failed to identify the Reel, the jig and its time-signature or the bones.
- (c) Here there was a wide variety of answers – many gaining full marks – but many missed the abrupt ending and mistook the increased vigour of the playing for a quickening of the tempo.

Q3 ‘Ripples in the Rock Pool’ – Shaun Davey/Rita Connolly

There was a lot to write about here and with the new marking system where any ‘valid’ point received a mark it was not difficult to score full marks. Most candidates mentioned the constant drone/repetition within verses and the soloist – also the instrumental interludes and the prominent Uilleann Pipes etc. As the QWC mark of 3 was awarded as part of this question it was only necessary to find 9 valid points within the question to gain full marks. A majority of candidates were able to do this.

Option 2 Incidental Music for Film, Television and the Stage

Q4 Extract from: In the Hall of the Mountain King – from ‘Peer Gynt’ by Grieg

- (a) (i) A popular set work – but few were able to name the three instruments which play the melody at the beginning.
- (ii) A great deal of wild guessing here, the simplest answers were the best – but there appeared to be confusion as to which instruments were playing and how they were being played.
- (b) (i) Here more wild guesses as to what was happening – this was a popular piece but answers were very disappointing.
- (ii) This question was not difficult – the information was fundamental to the set work and easily learned. However, not as many as we might have hoped scored the full five marks. Some thought the music was composed for the ‘Peer Gynt Suite’ while only a minority knew the name of the playwright.

Q5 Extract from: A Midsummer Night’s Dream – Overture - Mendelssohn

Extract A

- (a) (i)– (iii) A variety of different answers here, not many identifying the flutes at (i) mistaking the clarinet for an oboe at (ii) and woodwind for strings at (iii).
- (iv) Most were able to identify the Lovers/Love theme here.
- (b) (i)– (ii) Most were able to spell this composer’s name correctly.

Extract B

It was surprising how few were able to make six valid points here. Most identified the ‘donkey’ and how the orchestra achieved the effects, also the hunting calls and dialogue between the strings and brass. The rest was often vague comments which amounted to a great deal of ‘padding’. Being a very popular set work the answers were disappointing.

Q6 ‘Psalm 23’ – setting by Howard Goodall

A well known piece written for a popular television programme.

Most candidates mentioned the accompaniment, the structure, and the soloist – though not always identified as a treble or boy soprano. The interesting minor section with the choir and the quiet ending reflecting the opening.

There was a lot to write about here and with the new marking system where any ‘valid’ point received a mark it was not difficult to score full marks.

As the QWC mark of 3 was awarded as part of this question it was only necessary to find 9 valid points within the question to gain full marks.

Option 3 Vocal Music

Q7 'Why do the Nations' from Messiah by Handel

- (a) It was strange how many did not identify the 'work' but merely repeated the title of the aria, which in (ii) was mostly correct.
- (b) A wide range of comments here but few found six valid ones – too often we had a theological explanation of the text or how angry the singer was. Not enough musical detail with words like 'melisma' and 'coloratura' incorrectly applied.
- (c) (i) Answers varied between Bass and Tenor.
(ii) Mostly correct period here.
(iii) A wide variety of answers here, candidates had often written down as things learned as to what makes a piece belong to this period, rather than relevant aspects present in this audio extract.
- (d) (i) Most knew this was from an oratorio but (ii) not all knew about the Dublin first performance and many cities all over the world were mentioned.

Q8 'One Short Day' from the Musical 'Wicked' – Schwartz

- (a) (i) This produced a wide range of answers and very few managed to gain the full nine marks available. Some named the characters but didn't say what they were doing, some had a full choir singing in harmony, some went further than the opening 4 lines and described what happened later. However, there were a few good responses from those who had studied this set work carefully.
(ii) The cadence was correctly identified by the majority of candidates.
- (b) (i) Many different answers here, though some did identify the key change.
(ii) Again, many good answers but many others unsure of what was happening here.

Q9 Song: 'The Rose' – version by Westlife

A well loved song given a new 'twist' by Westlife. No marks unfortunately for naming the group, but some very good answers, carefully going through the piece starting with the piano ostinato, through its gradual crescendo to the quiet finish. There was a lot to write about here and with the new marking system where any 'valid' point received a mark it was not difficult to score full marks. As the QWC mark of 3 was awarded as part of this question it was only necessary to find 9 valid points within the question to gain full marks.

Performing and Appraising

- Once again we extend our thanks to the schools for their hospitality and cooperation in conducting these examinations. The majority of teachers were so well prepared for the visits with prearranged orders of candidates, and lists of pieces with appropriate grading.
- Overall the examination was an enjoyable experience for all examiners. Standards were high – incredibly so at times – and the music-making was often of an outstanding level. Most candidates understand the syllabus requirements, their performances are very ‘musical’ carefully phrased, with attention to dynamics and the intentions of the composers. It was not surprising to see large numbers gaining full marks here. A wide range of instruments were offered, both orchestral, electric and traditional.
- It is however, unfortunate that many of the same points need to be made every year, fewer teachers seem to be reading this report which is designed to help prepare candidates more effectively for the demands of the examination.
- This was the first year of the new specification, and although there were changes in the shape of the examination as a whole entity, the changes in the Performing and Appraising component were minimal. The only alteration was the provision of a mark for the Grade level of the piece presented in the Solo section, and the overall demands remained the same.
- Examiners commented again on the perception that some candidates appeared to be leaving the preparation of this element to a few months or less before the actual exam. Some appeared ill-prepared and ensembles often seemed to have been put together in a few weeks by the teachers. There is still evidence that pupils are not taking any initiative to set up ensembles themselves – or being given the opportunity to do so throughout the GCSE course, which is partially the reason for offering this element within the examination.
- Too many ensembles are still being teacher led and, in these cases, often teacher dominated. In the new specification we want to emphasise the candidate’s contribution in leading an ensemble and relating to the other players and this is distorted if a teacher is in charge – performing in the ensemble. On *no* account should a teacher actually conduct an ensemble otherwise this aspect of the pupil’s contribution cannot be evaluated.
 - * Care should be taken that a candidate’s part in an ensemble is not ‘doubled’ by another player and if this is the case in a piece the teacher should ensure that there is enough material for the candidate’s individual contribution to be examined.
- Too many solo pieces are *still* under a minute long – some often little more than 50 seconds. This is not enough for a candidate to show what they can do, and derisory after a two year course. There *must* be enough musical content within the performance for the examiner to carry out an evaluation. Unless the pieces are short it is better to perform one piece of appropriate length rather than two or more which might be of different levels – or weaker performances.

- There was another increase in the number of singers, and also those presenting pieces from Musical theatre. It is also heartening to see singers performing without music. This is essential for any kind of communication – there were still, unfortunately, instances where pupils sang from behind music stands or gazing at the music, and therefore lost marks in the ‘communication’ area.
- The use of backing racks seemed to be on the increase, and if properly balanced can be useful in the Solo section. They should be avoided in ensembles if possible as their use takes away from the candidate’s control over the ensemble.
- Some performances were disadvantaged by heavy handed piano accompaniments. Teachers are please asked to please bear this in mind when providing accompaniments to soloists.
- Although it’s now almost accepted, it is important for the tuning of instruments to be checked before performance and also sound levels on electronic equipment so that candidates can be clearly heard! Surrounding the candidate with a huge amount of other sounds from other instruments or amplification puts them at a disadvantage, and can make a true assessment extremely difficult. This can be particularly frustrating during performances by Rock and Pop groups. It is possible for those playing electric guitars to control their volume and the assessment of the performance takes careful note of this. It is also essential to curb the enthusiasm of some of the drummers in the rock groups – too often, when they themselves are not being assessed, given their head, they tend to push the tempo forward and/or drown out the part which is being assessed. It has been noted that there was a big improvement in this area this year, but some schools still need to be aware of this.
- One area which raised concern this year was the relationship of one of the performances to an area of study. It is expected that the link is to either the Compulsory area (repeated patterns in music) OR one of the two optional areas *which the candidate has studied*.
- This ‘link’ in many cases was very tenuous, and the area which gave rise to most questions was ‘Incidental Music’. In linking to this area the candidate is limited to music written to be played incidentally in a Film, Stage play or Television programme. This *excludes* pieces from Musicals or Opera where the music is not incidental but an intrinsic part of the work. Naturally arrangements of vocal pieces and pieces of incidental music for other instruments than those originally intended are acceptable.
- In the Discussion, candidates seemed better prepared this year. However, there were quite a few exceptions to this and information on the types of questions asked by examiners is available from CCEA. Naturally no two conversations will be the same.
The rapport with the examiner is important, and the questioning may vary in style from one to another. However, the guidelines are useful in preparing candidates for this part of the exam.
- Under no circumstances should a teacher be present in the examination room unless he or she is taking part in the solo as accompanist, or in extreme circumstances in the ensemble. This also applies to all other tutors or staff. Teachers should *not* be present during the Discussion – this is a conversation between pupil and examiner only. The only exception here would be as an interpreter for a pupil with a poor grasp of English.

- The recording or monitoring of any part of this examination by teachers is completely forbidden. Examiners will, as part of their duties, record all pupils' performances and Discussion in case a remark is requested after the results are announced in August of the examination year.
- It is not acceptable for any teacher to coax or attempt to cajole an examiner into revealing the candidates marks. This is not professional and should not occur not matter how well the individual knows the examiner on a personal level.
- It should be noted that candidates do not receive more marks by playing pieces beyond the required standard. It is better to play a more straightforward piece well than stumble through a more complex one.
- In some schools examiners are kept waiting when they arrive, for last minute rehearsals or administrative problems. When Examiners suggest a time of arrival, they expect if possible to be at the school a little before that so the exam can start promptly.
- It is most important that pupils are ready to begin at the approximate time given, and that there be no long 'waits' between candidates. Most examiners have to keep to strict timetables and may have more than one school to visit on any given day. Some examiners are happy to continue working through morning break or lunch periods, and some are not. This needs to be discussed with the examiner concerned before or upon their arrival.
- We really appreciate schools providing maps/directions before visits, and it would be most helpful if information was available on parking facilities. Most examiners will arrive on time but if parking space is limited it can cause unnecessary delays and a certain amount of frustration. Examiners do everything in their power to be at schools in good time to conduct these examinations.
- It would be appreciated if the examinations were confined to one room only and examiners not asked to move to different rooms during the examination. It is hoped that the room chosen can be away from any extraneous noise from bells, changing classes or pupils rehearsing.

Candidates who are unavoidably absent for the exam may be examined at a later date. Visiting examiners will issue forms to teachers on the day of the visit for those with genuine reasons to be examined later. These need to be completed and returned to CCEA as soon as possible after the examination.

Principal Moderator's Report

Composing and Appraising

Rationale and Overview of the Component

The new specification for GCSE Music requires candidates in this component, to create **two** contrasting compositions, one of which is to be related to the core or an optional Area of Study and maintain a composition log for each. This component is a **controlled assessment task** governing the setting, taking and marking of the task. It comprises 30% of the total marks available for the subject.

It is encouraging to report once again, that the standard of this component has remained high this year. A similar number of candidates gained full marks for their folios compared with previous years and, here again, the artistry and flair exemplified was of a very high standard. It is one of the stated aims of the GCSE Music examination, that it provides a suitable pre-requisite for progress to AS and A2 studies. The calibre of this component bodes well for such candidates.

It is again important to recognise the significant amount of time and effort taken by Centre staff in encouraging their candidates to neatly present their folios and provide a, generally excellent quality of scores and CDs. (Submission of minidisks has almost entirely disappeared). It was encouraging to note that fewer folios gained marks at the lowest grade boundaries.

Recordings and Scores

The use of notational software programs to provide scores has increased greatly. Most commonly with Sibelius 2 (up to and including Sibelius 5) used to present candidate work in a professional manner. The vast majority of centres included recordings of their compositions and scores. It is not, however, a requirement to submit recordings **and** scores for this new specification but their provision is a definite aid during moderation. In a small number of centres, the failure to adequately quantise scores, sometimes led to scores which confused, rather than clarified the compositional intent. In the weakest examples, candidates chose 'software' instrumentation inappropriate to the acoustic range or timbral effects of acoustic instruments of the same name. This is an element where a 'research' activity on instrumentation would be beneficial.

Success Criteria and Standard of Centre Assessments

Assessments, made by the overwhelming majority of centres, continued to be accurate and correctly reflected the calibre of their candidates' work. It was encouraging to note that, even with new success criteria, there were fewer centres reviewed at Post Moderation. Those which did require adjustment to marks, highlighted major discrepancies in interpretation of agreed standards which, for those centres affected, should result in greater focus on the assessment criteria grids in the specification and attendance at Agreement Trial support events. Analysis of centres represented at these events confirms that the overwhelming majority are accurately assessing this component.

Credit is due to the majority of centres on adopting a new set of success criteria which more accurately reflects the progression of composition skills across the suite of CCEA Music qualifications. Criteria (iii) was least well assessed, where high marks were often awarded for little or no evidence of secondary chords, effective cadences or added colour to the harmonic language as outlined in the criteria.

Criteria (i) still causes some concern when applied to strophic songs which have multiple verses but little musical development.

The vast majority of folios presented were assessed by centres under Success Criteria A (where technology does is not a core component). A very small number of centres used Success Criteria B, although in many cases this did not benefit candidates as there was insufficient evidence under criteria (iv) to gain highest marks. This choice was most frequently used by candidates who had chosen to present 'loop based' compositions but had not manipulated the original material sufficiently. It is the intention to provide information to centres about sequencing compositions, 'Garageband' and similar

programs. There will be a review of Success Criteria B pursuant to the Summer 2011 Examination series.

Overall, a smaller number of centres had marks adjusted and it was significant to note that a greater number of centres had marks amended upwards this year. It is important to note that a lot of time is spent in ensuring the TAC6s issued to centres are as affirming and positive as possible, celebrating good work, well assessed, authenticated and presented. Any constructive comments noted by the moderator team are designed to affect future in-centre planning and should be taken on board.

A further marked increase in the quality of recordings submitted suggests the frequent and knowledgeable use of in-house equipment, which is much to be applauded. The moderation team must be sure that the candidate composition log **fully** explains the processes involved in these recordings. There was again, clear evidence from the Summer 2011 series of exams, that an unacceptable number of recordings gave an added sophistication to the candidates' work, which had not been fully explained in accompanying logs or on the reverse of the Candidate Record Sheets.

The overwhelming majority of Centres and candidates are to be congratulated on the manner in which the new time constraints, authentication procedures and controlled assessment guidelines have been managed. There is clear evidence of very good practice in most schools, with only a small minority, falling short of agreed standards.

Authentication Procedures and Composition Logs

The Composition log is an integral part of the composition process. Logs submitted mainly used the CCEA template (available on the CCEA Music microsite). For those centres who chose to provide their own templates and/or composition diaries, these were detailed, highly informative, well-documented and beautifully presented. There were some excellent examples of good classroom practice in the teaching of composition skills, effective self, peer and teacher evaluation and a refreshing transparency in the quality of teaching and learning in Music Departments throughout the province.

It is a clear requirement of this component that a Log is submitted for **each** composition, and that they are authenticated by teachers **and** candidates. Those folios which did not adhere to this requirement were returned to centres, inevitably delaying the moderation process.

The specification states that teacher authentication should occur on **three** occasions during the life of each composition. The majority of staff completed the far right column of the log grid by a short progress update aligned to the pupil comment, along with a date and signature. This was far by the most accepted practice of authentication. It was disappointing that a small number of staff simply 'ticked' the box and initialled the pupil comment. While this fulfils the 'letter of the law', the Moderation Team consider it 'best practice' to include a short qualifying comment with each authentication.

Areas of Study

Repeated Patterns in Music proved the most popular related area of study with *Vocal Music* and *Musical Traditions in Ireland* closely following behind. On the whole these were artistically handled by the majority of candidates.

Links to *Vocal Music* resulted in many well-structured, stylishly-developed and balanced rock/pop/urban songs with well-established references to the features expected. It was

most encouraging to note the attention to detail paid by candidates in writing or researching appropriate texts. A small number of texts included inappropriate lyrics/subject matter. Teacher guidance in choice of appropriate material is key.

There were some very creative compositions particularly in the *Incidental Music* option and it was here that greatest creative use was made of technology, especially in music to accompany film or computer games.

There was a less programmatic element in the work of candidates in the *Musical Traditions in Ireland* Area of Study, but those who did choose this option presented particularly effective work. Traditional suites of Slow Airs, jigs, reels etc, were popular and a large number brought new insight to the (often formulaic) nature of Traditional Irish/Ulster-Scottish dance forms, sub-planting new rhythmic intricacy and harmonic invention. The Moderation team would remind centres that larger instrumental participation should not be interpreted or marked as ‘developmental’ unless it increases the number of independent melodic/rhythmic lines or adds to the textural/timbral complexity of the composition.

Musical Arrangements **no longer** exists as an area of study. The submission of arrangements as **compositions** is not considered to offer candidates sufficient opportunities to achieve high marks. Such submissions from 2012 onwards will warrant major adjustment to marks awarded under Success Criteria A(i) and A(ii).

Centres who use class-based compositional tasks as teaching tools clearly outlined individual outcomes showing differentiation between candidates and allowing creativity and freedom of choice. Larger number of candidates used the ‘Free Composition’ option. Centre staff are reminded that the specification does require two ‘contrasting’ compositions to be submitted.

Administration and Compliance with Specification

This year there were fewer arithmetical errors (perhaps due to the smaller number of success criteria and narrower mark bands). There were, however, a much larger number of errors associated with transfer of marks from Record sheets to the OMR sheets, the most common being failure to cross the ‘hundreds’ box! Such errors would have seriously disadvantaged candidates had they gone undiscovered. Centre staff are requested to pay particular attention to totalling **across** the criteria, transferring marks from Candidate Record Sheets to OMR and totalling **down** for the final folio mark. It is a requirement of this specification that all Candidate Record Sheets are countersigned by candidate and teacher and that all Composition Logs are signed by the candidate and authenticated by the teacher **three** times during the life of **each** composition. Large numbers of unauthenticated work had to be returned to centres to ensure compliance in this respect. Centres are also reminded that, submissions to CCEA should include the work of the highest and lowest scoring candidate, even if they have not been requested. There is also a requirement to include the TAC2 form of Internal Standardisation, even in one-teacher centres.

Use of Technology

The use of technology in the composition, presentation, notation, editing and recording of work increased again this year. It is most encouraging to note the increase in the technical knowledge shown by candidates in handling a wide range of media. There were fewer examples of work where candidates had not clearly indicated the use of the pre-

programmed tracks/loops or downloaded files. Where candidates employ non-original material such as loops, they will be unable to achieve full marks in criterion (i), as the material has not been **created** by the candidate. Teacher assessments did accurately reflect the original work of candidates in the vast majority of centres.

A large number of centres had submitted CDs which had not been correctly formatted for audio playback. It is important that teachers check that CDs can be played on stereo CD players (i.e. not only computers) prior to submission.

Conclusion

It is commendable that the high standards of previous years have been maintained in 2011, especially as this was the first examination under the new specification. Centre staff are further encouraged to continue their good work and focus on the areas of concern noted in this year's report. It is our hope that the fine work evidenced in the majority of centres continues and that candidates will continue to benefit from the high quality guidance and direction of their Music staff.

Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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