

CCEA GCSE Music
(Summer Series) 2012

Chief Examiner's and Principal Moderator's Report

music

Foreword

This booklet contains the Chief Examiner's/Principal Moderator's Report for CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Music from the Summer Series 2012.

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

Listening and Appraising

This year's papers discriminated well over a wide range of abilities. Once again a large percentage of candidates achieved high grades – a tribute to the excellent standards and dedication of teachers in centres.

The paper followed the new pattern of the previous year, being the second year of the new specification. Similar types of questions reflecting the full depth and breadth of the syllabus were in evidence. The examining team felt that all questions differentiated well, and none were outside the scope of the syllabus.

The introduction of having an option in the areas of study seems to have proved popular, Options 2 and 3 being the most frequently chosen combination.

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

- Many candidates still have difficulty writing briefly in coherent English, something which we like to see not only in short answers but also in those questions where the quality of written communication is assessed – six marks being allocated to this in Paper 2.
- Too many still rely on vague generalisations, sprinkling answers with terms such as repetition, sequence, imitation, homophonic, polyphonic, or phrases such as there are lots of “scat singing”... or “walking bass”... or “word painting” or “terraced dynamics”, without referring to specific points in the music or the supplied texts. Lists of vague unrelated comments will not do – they must be linked to text or music to have any validity. In marking the final questions in each of the options in Paper 2 a direct approach is taken with a tick indicating a valid point and a mark.
- 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 centre and candidate numbers. They should not use “tippex” to erase text nor make any use of “red” ink, as examiners use this during the marking process and it can lead to confusion.
- Too many candidates are still unable to spell the titles or composer's names of the “set” works, and many still have difficulty explaining their choice of “period” for a particular piece.

Examination Paper Part 1

Q1 *Beethoven Symphony No:7 – 2nd Movement “Allegretto” Bars 1–50 0:00–0:43*

- (a) (i) Plenty here to say about the opening chord – sustained/A Minor/began forte and goes to piano etc. but it was strange how many candidates weren't able to focus on the one chord, many commenting on the bars which followed.
- (ii) Most however recognised the String family here.
- (b) (i) Only a minority of pupils gained the two marks here, many adding the violin into the answer when only the lower strings were involved.

- (ii) Only a tiny minority were unable to complete the simple rhythmic ostinato rhythm. It should be noted that the time signature for this question was incorrectly printed, as 4/4 instead of 2/4. The senior team carried out a full scrutiny of work in relation to this question and judged that candidates had not been adversely affected by the incorrectly printed time signature, since the answer given would be the same in either 4/4 times or 2/4 times.
- (c) Most candidates completed this sentence correctly.

Q2 *Night and Day by Cole Porter – Polygram Label 0:00–1:12*

- (a) (i) Very mixed answers here – not many gaining the two available marks. Too often Timpani were selected as the drum element, and horn or trumpet as the brass instrument.
- (ii) A majority were able to count the pitches of the notes in the first verse.
- (b) (i) & (ii) Usually correct, with “plucked” or “pizzicato” mentioned.
- (c) (i) Again well answered – both line and word correct.
- (ii) Here is where candidates were differentiated by the quality and perceptiveness of their answers. Only a small number managed five valid points – the average gaining about three marks.

Q3 *“Mars” the Planets Suite – Holst. LSO/Davis*

Extract A: Bars 134–171 4:56–7:01

Extract B: Bars 171–end

Probably the most testing question.

- (a) (i) A big majority did manage to identify the order in which each of the complete printed extracts appeared, gaining the three available marks.
- (ii) A mixed bag of answers here with the wrong brass instruments too often selected.
- (b) (i) Invariably correct.
- (ii) Few gained the two marks here and a small number knew that the horns were the required answer.
- (c) Very few candidates scored the full five marks here. There were too many errors about the orchestration and what exactly was going on. Too many believed the woodwind were included, whereas it is a point in the score where they don't actually play.

Q4 *Te Deum – Karl Jenkins bars 1–77 0:00–2:01*

- (a) (i) A mix of choices here – unfortunately the obvious one “allegro” was not always selected.
- (b) (i)–(iii) Mostly very well answered. Some occasional problems with selecting SATB at part (ii) and the snare drum at part (iii).

- (c) (i) A good discriminator – the strongest candidates scoring really well here.
- (ii) A mixture of answers not always focused on the question. Too many mentioning other lines of the piece rather than concentrating on the lines specified.

Q5 *Text extract from: “Fast track to fame” by Louis Walsh*

This was an area where most candidates of all ranges and ability did well. Very few candidates scoring under seven marks.

Examination Paper Part 2

Option 1 Musical Traditions of Ireland

Q1 **Extract A “Carrickfergus”; The Chieftains**

Good answers in this section with majority of candidates gaining six out of the seven marks available.

- (a) (iii) A mix of choices here – unfortunately the obvious one “allegro” was not always selected.
- (iv) Most marks in this section lost in this part of the question with candidates misdiagnosing the ternary structure.

Extract B “Le Rêve Passe”; Ballygowan Flute Band

Universally well answered with the full name of the band noted and the wide variety of flutes, piccolo, side drum and cymbals identified.

- Q2** (a) (i)& (ii) Soprano voice and word on highest note (“dance”) identified by majority of candidates
- (b) (i) This part of the question highlighted a major weakness amongst candidates where there is insufficient understanding of texture definitions whether applied to vocal or instrumental extracts.
- (c) (i)& (ii) These two sub questions were disappointingly answered. The slip jig and accompanying time signature were not identified by many candidates, the majority of whom stated ‘jig’. As a set work, there was a higher expectation of success which was not realised. The second part focused candidates’ attention on **musical features** rather than a description of what happens.
- (d) Again, some surprising answers which failed to identify the ‘Riverdance’ – a key set work in this Area of Study. The choral group “Anuna” stumped a large number of candidates.

- Q3** The structure of this question appeared to focus answers, and there was evidence to suggest that this assisted candidates in refining their answers. Part (a) had a large number of musical ‘signposts’ resulting in the majority of candidates gaining the four marks. Part (b) was less well answered, with many candidates regurgitating what they had written in part (a), failing to relate the extract to the characteristics of the Area of Study, for example, traditional instrumentation, structure of the extract, use of dances, changing metres, ornamentation, rhythmic accompaniment, repetition of musical ideas, etc.

- (c) Some very insightful reasons to like the piece were noted. Those who did not enjoy the piece were less articulate in highlighting their reasons.

Nine valid points were sought as QWC accounted for a further three marks.

Option 2 Incidental Music for Stage, Screen and Television

- Q4** (a)&(b) Proved to be 'good earners' for this set work. There was a good knowledge base evident.

- (c) (i) Most candidates correctly identified 'perfect'. Part (ii) saw many candidates lose a valuable mark by not giving the full title of the film "Pirates of the Caribbean – Dead Man's Chest". Very surprising to read several scripts which could not identify film or composer!

- Q5** This was poorest answered question of the whole paper.

- (a) (ii) No violins or double basses are present in the extract. These were the two most frequent wrong answers.
- (b) Most candidates recognised the forte dynamics, but the staccato articulation was less well managed. The often detailed and florid answers to part (ii) failed to actually identify the 'scale'.
- (c) The second subject theme from the Exposition was in the dominant key and this eluded many candidates.
- (d) (i) The period of the work and "sonata form" were the most frequent wrong answers. Again, it would be expected that these key 'facts' should benefit all candidates without sacrificing a complete playing in order to aurally identify the answers.
- (ii) This was a good differentiator but highlighted many shortcomings in the identification of the Romantic style. Most candidates noted programmatic elements as an easily recognisable feature. Bland generalisations like 'big orchestra' lots of dynamics etc., lost candidates valuable marks.

- Q6** This proved a popular question which the majority of candidates appear to have engaged with. Again the question was split into key parts to aid the candidates. Marks were awarded in section (b) even if they repeated what had already been written in section (a).

Vivid imaginations were at work in large numbers of cases giving picturesque word pictures. These, however, did not answer the question, which focused more on the instrumentation and the use of themes, identifying form and structure and pinpointing just how the drama was created.

Once again valuable marks were needlessly lost here, by not carefully reading the question. Too many answers presented description of the piece without addressing the actual sub questions. Both sections (a) and (b) had a wide range of acceptable answers.

Nine valid points were sought as QWC accounted for a further three marks.

Option 3 Vocal Music

- Q7**
- (a)
 - (i) Well identified as Bass and Tenor. Reversal of this order was also accepted.
 - (ii) The dynamic noted on the score and in the audio was forte. Crescendo, although a natural occurrence as more parts would enter, did not apply to the ‘opening bars’ as noted in the rubric.
 - (b)
 - (i) The only correct answer is Rhythm 1, not only because it is transcribed directly from the vocal score (including the grouping of notes, bars and stems), but also because it is the only rhythm with the correct number of beats! There was no attempt made to align the spacing/grouping of all three rhythms, as the question was not asking to compare rhythm outlines.
 - (ii) The octave leap was correctly noted by most who attempted the question.
 - (c) Again a very disappointing response to the vocal texture. The mark scheme was broadened to include imitative, canonic and fugal textures in addition to ‘polyphonic/contrapuntal’.
 - (d) Although much better recognised than Q5, noting factors which define the period resulted in many bland, unspecific comments such as ‘the orchestra used’, ‘the way it sounds’ etc. Noting that the piece was written in the Baroque era without specifying composer or name of work did not gain a mark. “Terraced dynamics” while admittedly a key feature of the Baroque, was not pertinent to this extract. Candidates need to be more selective about which features they can actually ‘hear’ from the extract.
- Q8**
- (a)
 - (i) A sizeable number of candidates left the question blank. The interval of a third was the most common mistake. The interval of a fourth is a key building block of the melodic material of this set work and, as such, answers given were disappointing.
 - (b) Most candidates achieved well here, although marks were needlessly thrown away in part (i) when a line number was given as an answer to a question which asked for a word.
 - (c)
 - (i) Texture was poorly recognised.
 - (ii) A wide variety of rock features which also occur in many of the earlier lines of music, were relevant as answers.
 - (e) Large numbers could not correctly identify the two main characters singing in the extract. A lot of candidates failed to answer correctly that “Wicked” was first performed in the twenty-first century.
- Q9**
- Moreso than the other two longer type questions, responses suffered from focus in the answers with too many candidates giving a description of all that they heard, without clearly answering the two sections. For example, hearing applause at the beginning of the recording has nothing to do with the setting on lines 1–8 or the orchestral accompaniment from end of line 8.
- Responses in part (a) were generally perceptive in most cases although many failed to note that it was male singing, or that the accompaniment was sparse and that large

acapella sections were punctuated by string chords.

Nine valid points were sought as QWC accounted for a further three marks.

Performing and Appraising

- The examining team thanks the schools for their hospitality and assistance once more in conducting these examinations. Thanks also to those teachers who were so well prepared for the visits with prearranged orders of candidates, lists of pieces and exam numbers.
- Examiners did comment on the perception that many schools appeared to be leaving the preparation of ensemble performances to a few months before the actual exam. Often candidates seemed ill prepared and ensembles often put together in a few weeks, and although there were many varied and interesting ensembles offered this year there are still too many which tend to be teacher dominated and little evidence that pupils were taking the initiative to set up ensembles themselves.
- A child's contribution in leading an ensemble and relating to other players is distorted if a teacher is in charge – either performing in the ensemble or conducting it and this makes the final part of the assessment difficult.
- Too many solo pieces are still much too short, often under a minute long – some even less than 50 seconds. This is not enough for a candidate to show what they can do, or be adequately assessed and is not acceptable after a two year course.

The following points made in previous reports have still not been addressed by some centres:

- 1 In some centres, examiners are kept waiting when they arrive, for last minute rehearsals or administrative problems. 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 prearranged with the examiner concerned before they arrive.
- 2 It is unacceptable if an arrangement to split a large entry into two separate days is then suddenly altered when the examiner arrives. No examiner should be expected to examine more than 20 candidates in one day.
- 3 We really appreciate some centres providing maps/directions before visits, and it would also 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.
- 4 Arrival times are approximate and examiner do everything in their power to be at schools to start the examination at the pre-arranged time, and sufficient time is allocated to all the examining team so that the examinations can be conducted in a relaxed manner.
- 5 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. One solo piece or ensemble piece is all that is required but must be of a reasonable length: not less than two minutes or more than five, as an approximate guide.
- 6 Teachers may only remain in the room during the examination if they are participating

in some way during the performance. Teachers are not permitted to be in the room during the discussion element, and should observe this rule to avoid any embarrassment by having to be told to leave by the examiner.

- 7 Examiners are instructed not to enter into any discussion with the teacher as to how the children have performed – teachers should not therefore press examiners for such information. All pupils' performances are recorded and should any pupil or teacher be dissatisfied with their marks they can appeal for a re-mark in the usual way after results are published.
- 8 It would be appreciated if the examinations were confined to one room only and not asked to move to different rooms during the examination.
- 9 It is encouraging to note that there has been an increase in the number of candidates from different ethnic backgrounds entering the examination. In cases where a pupils has a minimal grasp of English, it would be appreciated if someone could be provided to translate for them during the discussion. This person would only be in the examination room for this part of the examination.
- 10 Candidates who are unavoidably absent for the exam may be examined at a later date. Visiting examiners will issue forms to teachers for those with genuine reasons to be examined later. These need to be completed and returned to CCEA.

Solo Performance

A great variety of pieces using a wide range of instruments and styles were again in evidence this year. Although there was evidence of pieces being much too short, the majority presented were well within the required time limit. A few candidates chose to present more than one piece, and provided this is within the time frame there is nothing to stop anyone doing this. It does make the examiner's assessment more difficult though, for the assessment would be based on the total performance. If a second piece is less successful than the first, it can affect the candidate's mark. It should be remembered that the examination does not unfortunately reward a candidate's versatility but their expertise as demonstrated by the pieces they choose to play.

Most candidates however, do well and 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 and traditional.

There was another noticeable increase in the number of singers again this year and it was pleasing to see that only a few singers now sing behind a music stand or a copy of their song when taking part in the exam, allowing them to better communicate with the listener. By doing so they fail to communicate with the examiner and thereby lose marks. Teachers are to be congratulated for their accomplishments to instrumentalists and singers – occasionally however, there were instances where candidate performances were marred by insensitive, heavy-handed playing.

Accompaniments help to give candidates confidence when they perform, it is a pity if pupils are left to play complicated piece with no accompaniment whatsoever.

Ensemble Performance

This year a large number of candidates scored highly, with many novel and highly enjoyable ensembles. However, there is still a feeling that in some cases ensembles are unrehearsed and appear to be put together at the last minute. There also seemed to be too many teachers still

taking part in ensembles. We understand that with small numbers this can often be a necessity, but we would encourage schools to make this part of the examination as “pupil based” as possible. We see the teacher’s role as guiding, arranging and preparing. As already noted, an ensemble which includes a teacher tends to be teacher led.

Last year we highlighted the increased use of “backing-tracks”. Again we need to emphasise that this is acceptable only in the solo part of the exam – provided no other accompaniment exists – and if used should be set at an appropriate level. They are not however, appropriate in ensemble work as they tend to dictate the tempo which is a very “personal” matter for the candidate. Can a pupil be assessed in relating to a backing-track? If they *have* to be included there should be sufficient *numbers of other pupils* within the ensemble for the candidate to relate to.

It is also important that any candidate performing in an ensemble should be able to be heard by the examiner. 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 can tend to push the tempo forward and sometimes drown out the part which is being assessed. It has been noted that there was big improvement in this area this year, but some centres still need to be aware of this.

It is heartening to see that more groups are taking time before performing to check not only their tuning but also the balance of sound.

We noted this year that sometimes in ensemble performances there were still one or more other participants playing the same part as the candidate. In such cases the examiner can ask for the performance to be repeated as many times as any part has been doubled with the candidates involved taking turns in performing.

It is recommended that candidates presenting the Bagpipes as a solo instrument or ensemble with a side drummer should do so in as large a space as possible.

The Discussion

There was a wide range of responses to the discussions this year. Candidates should be prepared to:

- Talk about the piece they have just played, its background and any problems they may have had during the learning and performing of it.
- Be able to link their piece to an area of study.
- Name the areas they have studied and talk about any of the set works that particularly appealed to them.

Candidates are now better prepared for this element, many providing interesting explanations of their pieces, how they linked to the areas of study and the difficulties they had encountered during the learning process. Examiners noted that others however, seemed unprepared and sometimes recited a lot of irrelevant information which had been learned beforehand.

Principal Moderator's Report

Composing and Appraising

Rationale & 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 qualification.

Last year's high standards were once again replicated in this component, although it is fair to state that there were less truly outstanding post-GCSE standard folios submitted. A similar number to last year, did gain full marks in the component and, 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. I am confident that the high standards exemplified by the highest attaining candidates have given them a strong foundation to develop higher level composing skills. 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 score and CDs. (Submission of MiniDiscs has almost entirely disappeared.) It was encouraging to note that fewer folios gained lowest grade boundary marks. Most who did, had usually only submitted one composition.

Recordings and Scores

The use of notational software programmes to provide scores has increased greatly with Sibelius 2 up to and including Sibelius 6 used to present candidates 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 the 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 a notation which confused, rather than clarified the compositional intent. In the weakest examples, candidates continued to choose '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. The logs in many of these cases gave no indication why certain instrumentation had been chosen.

Success Criteria and Standard of Centre assessments

Assessments made by overwhelming majority of centres, continued to be accurate and correctly reflected the calibre of their candidates. It was interesting to note that there was a slight increase in the number of 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 the annual Agreement Trial. Analysis of centres represented at these events confirms that the overwhelming majority are accurately assessing this component.

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 melodic or rhythmic differences.

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 using sequencing software for composing, "Garageband" and similar programs. The review of Success Criteria B noted last year will take place this year.

Overall a slightly larger number of centres had marks adjusted and in many cases this resulted from inconsistent marking in the centre, new staff marking for the first time and thus inexperienced in the application of the criteria or centres which had already received advice from previous years showing little improvement in internal standardisation. It was significant to note that, once again, a greater number had marks amended upwards this year. A considerable amount of time is spent in ensuring the TAC 6's issued to centres are as affirming and positive as possible, celebrating good work, well assessed, authenticated and presented. Any constructive comments noted by the moderating team are designed to affect future in-centre planning and should not be ignored.

A significant 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 2012 series of submissions, 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 Sheet.

The overwhelming majority of Centres and candidates are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have managed the time constraints, authentication procedures and controlled assessment guidelines. There is clear evidence of very good practice in most schools, with only a small minority, falling short of agreed standards. This is a particularly pleasing development, given that there are many more centres submitting controlled assessments as part of consortium arrangements.

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 micro site). Some centres 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 by far the most accepted practice of authentication. It was disappointing to note, that despite

guidance offered at Agreement Trials, a growing 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 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. The moderation team did not encounter any inappropriate lyrics/subject matter in folios this year.

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 compositions. 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.

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.

Musical Arrangements **no longer** exists as an area of study. The submission of arrangements of pre-existing melodies as compositions is not considered to offer candidates sufficient opportunities to achieve high marks. Such submissions from 2013 onwards will warrant major adjustments to marks awarded under Success Criteria A(i) and A(iii). Candidates are, however, still able to compose their own melodies and create musical arrangements of these.

Centres who use class-based compositional tasks as teaching tools clearly outlines individual outcomes showing differentiation between candidates and allowing creativity and freedom of choice. This year, more 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 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 again 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 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 candidate, even if they have not been requested. There is also a requirement to

include the TAC 2 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 continues to increase year on year. It is most encouraging to note the increase in the technical knowledge shown by candidates in handling a wide range of school and home-based media.

There were fewer examples of work where candidates had not clearly indicated the use of the pre-programmed tracks/loops, downloaded files or material from media-sharing websites (e.g. YouTube etc.). Teacher assessments accurately reflected the original work of candidates in the vast majority of centres.

This year, there was an increase in the number of centres submitting CDs which had not been correctly formatted for audio playback. This seriously impacts the time frame for the completion of moderation and can cause added annoyance in centres, to whom material will be returned.

Conclusion

It is commendable that the high standards of last year has been maintained in 2012, especially as the specification 'beds in'. 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.

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