

**CCEA GCSE Music (Legacy)
Summer Series 2018**

Chief Examiner's Report and Principal Moderator's Report

music

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Music (Legacy) for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet 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.

Contents

Assessment Unit 1	Composing and Appraising	3
Assessment Unit 2	Performing and Appraising	5
Assessment Unit 3	Listening and Appraising	8
Contact details		12

GCSE MUSIC (LEGACY)

Principal Moderator's Report

Component 1 Composing and Appraising

The GCSE Music specification which concluded with the Summer 2018 series, in this component required 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. The component was a controlled assessment task governing the setting, taking and marking of the task. It comprised 30% of the total marks available for the subject.

Overall Trend

The high standards of the previous year were maintained, and as for many of the previous years, there were a small amount of exceptional portfolios, a considerably lower amount of weaker compositions, but a very large grouping of compositions in the Grade C/D boundary.

Congratulations for the significant amount of time and effort taken by centre staff in encouraging their candidates to neatly present their folios and provide a high quality of scores and CD's.

Recordings and Scores

Notational software use in the printing of scores is now standard practice and exhibited flair and expertise. Fewer compositions included software "instrumentation" inappropriate to the acoustic range or timbral effects of the same-named acoustic instruments.

Success Criteria and Standard of Centre Assessments

It was most gratifying that as the current specification comes to an end, the standard of internal assessment conducted in centres was consistently good. For the third year running fewer centres were reviewed at Post Moderation and less than half of these, had adjustments made to centre marks.

Greater consistency has been achieved in the assessment of Criteria (i) and (iii) which had caused most issues in previous years. There is therefore much greater confidence that the Success Criteria in the new Specification will not cause undue stress to teachers marking either of the stimulus or free compositions.

There were considerably fewer centres which required their work to be sent back due to incomplete authentication procedures. Again it was pleasing to see how many centres had given helpful comments three times during the life of the composition as per the Specification, rather than just initial the composition log.

Areas of Study

Repeated Patterns was the most popular area of study, as indeed it had been throughout the entire life of this specification. There were very few programmatic compositions in the Incidental area. The fusion of rock and country elements in many of the Musical Traditions in Ireland compositions mirrors current trends in this genre.

Use of Technology

The increase in sophistication of use of sequencing programs, Garageband, Logic, Sibelius, etc., in the years since this legacy specification has been live, is astounding and the flair and creation of ideas is to be applauded.

Conclusion

It is very clear that, as we leave this specification behind, centres are in a very strong place to direct, support and encourage their students in this component in the new Specification. Congratulations to all staff who have given such quality guidance and maintained the consistency of the component over the years.

Chief Examiner's Report

Component 2 Performing and Appraising

At the outset of this report I would like to commend everyone who has been part of the process in assisting and encouraging the candidates to achieve of their best as they prepare and present their performances. Centres were generally very well organised and welcomed the examiner into their Music Department, setting the tone for the examination session. The information contained in the remainder of the report is to provide similar support and is a distillation of some of the most significant observations and issues raised by the team of examiners following their visits to centres throughout the past examination period.

There were fewer performances that required backing tracks this year and when they were used it was with varying degrees of success. Sometimes they provided a secure support for the performer but some were detrimental by exposing issues of balance or timing. More alarmingly, however, was the number of centres that are still not aware of or fully complying with the guidelines on the use of technology. A circular was distributed last year (Cir.S/IF/18/17 : March 2017) and the importance of these guidelines was also included in the Chief Examiner's Report 2017. The use of mobile phones, pen drives or other devices connected to the internet are strictly prohibited and will result in the candidate being investigated for malpractice. This includes the playing of backing tracks or reading music and lyrics from such devices. We urge all centres to familiarise themselves with this circular and to have all backing tracks available for the candidate in line with these guidelines and without the need for an examiner to operate any equipment.

The variety of expectations between centres for the speed at which an examiner is expected to carry out their work continues to be significant and we would ask that centres be aware of this when planning the day. Some examiners reported feeling rushed without sufficient time to carefully consider and complete the candidate assessment form (ExA4). It is beneficial to the candidates that the examiners are given sufficient time to write detailed comments reflecting the performance that has taken place and would ask centres to note that normally no more than 18 candidates should be examined in one day, with an appropriate break for lunch. On the other hand, some examiners were left waiting for lengthy periods of time either upon arrival at a centre or between candidates. In many cases an examiner will have to visit two or more schools on the same day, so it is vital that the first school be well organised and no time wasted so that the examiner has time to travel to the next school and also have a break for lunch. Any centres who are in any doubt are encouraged to check their proposed schedule of times and candidates with the examiner prior to their arrival. Examiners will usually plan to arrive in time to greet pupils and after about 10 minutes begin their examinations. This time of greeting all the candidates is an important moment for both pupils and the examiner as it does tend to put the performers at their ease as well as giving the examiner an opportunity to share information about the examination process with them all, saving time from having to do this with each candidate individually as they come to perform.

There were very few performances offered below a grade 3 standard but there was, once again this year, a significant number of candidates who opted to perform at a higher level, grade 6 and above, for both the solo and ensemble examinations. This opened the way for more errors to be made with the demands on the performer being greater; therefore the assessment criteria was not fulfilled to the level it could have had a less demanding piece been performed. It is also worth noting that although a piece may have scored well in Grade Examination, it is essential that the piece allows the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate the technical and expressive skills as outlined in the assessment criteria for this particular examination: it is best practice for this to be discussed at an early stage of preparation for the performance. If a candidate makes a "false start" to their performance it is quite acceptable for them to start again. However, once the performance is over, the candidate will not be allowed to repeat the piece again.

Solo Performance

There were many well-prepared solo performances this year on a wide variety of musical instruments. In addition to being technically assured, thought had gone in to phrasing, dynamics and there was a personal connection to the piece which was clearly communicated with the listener. The duration of some performances was less than one minute as is often the case with some grade examination pieces. Although the overall duration is considered as a combination of both performances, please note that there must be enough content to enable examiners to make an accurate assessment and for candidates to access the maximum number of marks available to them. There were also several individual performances that lasted over seven minutes. It is expected that after a two-year preparation period, performances should last at least one and a half minutes minimum but not over five minutes.

Some centres encouraged candidates to present two or more pieces for solo performance. This was unnecessary and sometimes a variance in degree of difficulty or level of performance led to a lower overall mark being achieved.

Vocal performances continue to be a popular choice for candidates with Musical Theatre and Pop genres being significantly more popular than Folk or Classical repertoire. There were many excellent performances achieved, but there were also performances that focused on imitating a performer rather than giving consideration to phrasing, tone and articulation. It is also important that singers do not use music or text copies, or hide behind a music stand when presenting their songs as it detracts from the important communication between soloist and listener.

The candidates should be able to enjoy a significantly different experience from performing a solo to being part of an ensemble, but some centres presented solo performances in a similar way to ensemble performances and vice versa. The accompaniment for solos should be minimal without a focus on ensemble and within an ensemble the focus should be on the performance achieved by working together with others. At the other extreme there were many solo performances presented without an accompaniment where one would have been beneficial to the candidate particularly in terms of timing, tuning and dynamics. We encourage teachers to help their students keep this clear and, within the spirit of the specification, ensure that they choose repertoire that gives them the opportunity to do this clearly.

We expect teachers to indicate the Grade level of the pieces presented by their candidates and we are grateful for the increase in the number of centres who provide this information on their schedule of performances at the start of the day.

Ensemble Performance

There was an even greater variety of interesting and musical ensembles presented from vocal ensembles, instrumental quartets, traditional groups, rock groups and duetting instrumentalists. Teachers are reminded that ensembles must consist of at least two live musicians performing undoubled, independent parts that are played simultaneously (*Cir.S/IF/50/11 : March 2011*). While there will be occasions in a performance where a part may be doubled, particularly in Irish Traditional Groups and African Drumming, it should be ensured that the candidate being assessed has opportunity to take a solo part exemplifying the level of performance they are capable of during any given performance. (*Cir.S/IF/15/15: March 2015*). Should an examiner discover that another player is doubling a candidate's part, that player will not be permitted to remain in the ensemble during the examination. Most ensembles tended to have small numbers meaning that a candidate's contribution was easily identifiable and candidates also realised that they didn't need to be the prominent instrument to be examined successfully. Occasionally a centre would produce a large ensemble and this makes it more difficult to fairly assess the candidate's contribution to the overall ensemble and also to ensure that their part is independent. Under no circumstances should the ensemble be conducted.

It is hoped that candidates themselves will set these ensembles up, with teacher guidance, and then practice together in preparation for the examination. A repeat of the solo style performance with candidate and accompanist is not a true ensemble in the spirit of the specification and it is often the case that when a pupil performs with a teacher accompanist as an ensemble, the teacher invariably “leads”. This year there were many ensembles where the candidate had very limited opportunity to influence the performance of the ensemble as it was teacher-led. It is also worth noting that the layout of ensembles should be considered so that each performer can communicate throughout the performance. If a soloist performs with an accompanist (eg. Guitar or Piano), it is permissible for the accompanist to use this performance for their ensemble performance assessment, but not for the soloist.

We must stress that setting up ensembles should be quick and easy, well rehearsed beforehand with all necessary instruments tuned and all equipment to hand. Checking of sound levels is expected before starting and time can be allowed for this but a significant number of candidates seemed unaware of the balance problems that particularly electronic instruments and drumkits can pose and were unable to correct it in the performance. The teacher or sound technician is allowed to stay in the room during the performance, but there must be no manipulating of sound levels by them during the performance. This was done very efficiently in many centres with everything prepared in advance of the examiner’s arrival, however in some centres this resulted in lengthy delays while groups were set up from scratch.

It is vital that teachers and pupils check that on their Exa4 form that the instrument being examined is clearly defined and easily distinguished from the other members of the group if played back in recording. If this is not done then it is impossible for that part of the examination to be remarked at a later date should a review of marking be requested.

The Discussion (Viva)

The discussion should take place immediately after the relevant performance and, although it should be a conversation without any notes, the candidate is encouraged to use a score or their instrument to aid their discussion and point out details. If possible the music used by the candidate should be given to the examiner before the discussion begins so that it can be a focus for the initial questioning. There were many excellent examples of candidates being able to hold musically technical conversations referring to both the score and their instrument.

The conversation between the candidate and examiner will ideally be different for each performance, but they do follow a recognisable structure and as the series and sequence of questions has been established for many years, teachers and candidates should all be aware of what will be asked. The conversation on the learning process demonstrated that often pupils seem to be unaware of either what they have done to get to their performance or what and why their teachers are teaching them the way they do. Many candidates resorted to a demonstration of learning a passage by playing it at increasing tempi, which often exposed technical problems and increase the time of the overall viva, and then would often struggle to develop the conversation. Many candidates were however able to demonstrate exercises, scales and studies that they had worked on and related these to learning the piece that they had performed.

The piece being discussed must be connected to one of the areas of study. These tended to be well recognized, but often lacked the necessary detail to access the top marks. Some links were rather tenuous or superficial, particularly with Repeated Patterns, and Vocal Music was often not developed more than recognising that “it is a song”.

We encourage all candidates to spend time throughout the learning process becoming aware of what they are doing to reach their performance goal. Many candidates demonstrated this admirably but a significant number of excellent performances were denied being awarded full marks as they didn’t reflect on what they had achieved in sufficient detail.

All the examiners report how much they enjoy the experience of visiting schools, meeting fellow teacher-musicians and comment on the very high standards of professionalism and passion for the subject. We thank the schools once again for this.

Component 3

Listening and Appraising

Paper 1

This was an accessible paper which allowed pupils to demonstrate their knowledge. The wording of the questions was generally very clear and the candidates demonstrated a good understanding of what they were being asked to do.

- Q1**
- (a) (i) This question was well answered.
 - (ii) Candidates still struggle to accurately identify instruments playing in sections of their set works.
 - (b) (i) There were many candidates who identified the string technique as “pizzicato” rather than “col legno”.
 - (ii) Incorrect identification of the term “col legno” resulted in candidates losing a mark in Part (ii) of this question.
- Q2** The score reading aspect of this question presented difficulty to some candidates. Weaker candidates found it difficult to score highly in this question.
- (a) (i) This was very well answered with most candidates achieving full marks.
 - (ii) Many candidates scored well here. Candidates need to explain fully what the term meant to gain a mark. “Piano” by itself did not explain what the performer had to do.
 - (iii) This question was generally well answered. Some of the weaker candidates did not understand the question and did not write an interval.
 - (b) (i) There were very few candidates achieving full marks for this question due to the separation of Question 2 (b)(i) into three separate parts. Many candidates were unsure of what to write other than “modulates”. Many candidates wrote about other features of the music rather than focusing on making detailed points about the key change. Only a small number of candidates were able to gain all the points in the mark scheme.
 - (ii) There were mixed responses with candidates struggling to differentiate “allegretto”, “vivace” and “presto”.
 - (iii) The vast majority of responses here were correct. A small number of candidates wrote “pizzicato”.
 - (c) There were a number of candidates who wrote “plagal” when answering a question about a cadence. The GCSE specification only requires pupils to be able to recognise “perfect” or “imperfect”.
 - (d) The majority of candidates identified this correctly.
- Q3** Many candidates achieved full marks in this question.
- (a) Weaker candidates failed to gain high marks in this question as they did not comment in sufficient detail on what was happening in the extract. Comments like “major key” and “4/4” and “violins play” were not sufficient when pupils had been asked to describe a piece they had studied in detail. There were lots of credible points in the mark scheme which enabled a candidate to gain 7 marks. Pupils who described the music in detail were able to achieve full marks.
 - (b) (i) Pupils needed to write “Pachelbel’s Canon” or “Canon in D” rather than simply “Canon” to gain a mark.
 - (ii) This was very well answered with the majority of candidates answering “sixteenth century”.

(iii) Some pupils misinterpreted the question and wrote “cello” and “organ” rather than writing two continuo instruments.

Q4 This was an accessible question for many candidates.

- (a) (i) Nearly all of the candidates were unable to identify the solo voice as “baritone” with many writing “tenor”.
- (ii) The majority of candidates gained two marks for this question.
- (b) Again, this question was accessible and most candidates gained two marks.
- (c) This was an accessible question which allowed for differentiation. At the higher end pupils were commenting in detail on the instrumental parts enabling them to gain 7 marks. At the lower end pupils were commenting on the voices and were unable to pick out specific instruments. Candidates need to ensure that they write in sufficient detail and refer to where in the music things are taking place. For example, writing that there is “bassoon countermelody after the voice stops singing” or “there is pizzicato strings on the final chord”. Writing “pizzicato”, “bassoon” without describing where it happens in the extract is not worthy of credit.

Q5 An accessible question which resulted in high marks for the majority of candidates.

- (i) (ii) The majority of candidates answered these correctly.
- (a) (i) Some candidates misunderstood the question and simply copied “sempre” from the score.
- (ii) (iii) The majority of candidates achieved full marks in this question.
- (b) Candidates are still losing marks in questions like Part (c) where they are asked to identify the work. A large number of candidates wrote “Dies Irae” rather than “Requiem”. Very few candidates were able to recall who the work was dedicated to.

Q6 This question was generally very well answered with many candidates achieving full marks.

Paper 2

The balance of the paper was similar to previous years, although the division of one question in each Area of Study allowed for a larger number of the set works to be assessed, in this the last year of the specification. This paper was accessible, effectively differentiated and allowed all pupils to demonstrate their knowledge. The wording of the questions was clear and there was no evidence that candidates had misunderstood what was required in the questions.

Q1 (a) (i)-(iii) These questions were well answered.

- (iv) Candidates still struggle to accurately identify dance styles, even though the “Reel” was in the title!
- (b) Well identified.
- (c) A generous marks scheme meant that the majority of candidates gained at least 3 of the 5 marks available.
- (d) Composer, work and extract universally well identified.

Q2 **Extract A**

- (a) (i) Generous mark scheme here again. Candidates frequently however failed to note the rising arpeggio, and we do not accept “drums”.
- (ii) (iii) Identified correctly in most cases.
- (iv) The full name of Ballygowan Flute Band was the only acceptable answer.

Q2 Extract B

- (b) (i) This was disappointingly answered with less than half of candidates correctly noting the order of the melodic extracts.
- (ii) The type of pipe had to be identified as Bagpipe/Highland to gain the mark.
- (iii) Surprisingly weak answer for a set work question.
- (c) Candidates were asked to identify the extract – not the work and Heights of Dargai was frequently missed.

Q3 The rubric for Questions 3, 6 and 9 was very specific this year, as we were keen to ensure that candidates focused their answer to very specific parts of the music, rather than give bland, generalised comments about tempo, key, etc., Very generous mark schemes in these questions was designed to give candidates as many marks as possible.

Question 3 was disappointing answered with the many significant changes in the repeats of the Irish Waterwoman melody being missed, perhaps due to the speed of the extract.

- Q4** (a) This was quite a challenging question given that it focused on specifically the opening 6 notes of a very short extract. It was ,however, quite well answered.
- (b) Well answered, although the identity of “chord” as the last missing word, escaped many.
- (c) Composer, structure and name of work well identified.

Q5 Extract A

- (a) (i)-(iii) This was the best answered question of the paper, although again “drum” was not accepted.

Extract B

- (b) Similar to Question 2 (b), few candidates correctly identified the correct order of the melodic extracts.
- (c) The answers suffered from too many generalities and missed key instrumentation and thematic signposts. The melody is clearly in two halves, with different instrumentation in the repeats.

Q6 Here again, a lot of the instrumentation references were reduced to naming the instruments without trying to indicate what the instruments played. There were very clear thematic sections to the Film music extract and the allegretto temp should have aided candidates to be able to clearly identify these. There were many unqualified comments which were squandered opportunities to gain from the very generous mark scheme.

- Q7** (a) (i)-(ii) Correctly identified in most cases.
- (b) (i) The middle incorrect note was the least well identified.
- (ii) (iii) Well answered
- (c) (i) (ii) Well answered, although some could not identify what had happened to the key.
- (d) Aria, oratorio, Handel and Dublin identified. The Part of Messiah was very poorly identified as Part 2.

- Q8** (a) (i) The answers were disappointing, with too many giving bland generalisations eg., fast, more excited, etc., A generous mark scheme gave 11 possible options. Most candidates gained less than 3.
- (ii) Well identified as an interval of a third.

(b) (i) (ii) The mark scheme allowed for triplet/scale or scalic in the second space.

(c) (i) (ii) Pleasingly well identified. This work had not been included in a Listening and Appraising test for a number of years.

Q9 Once again, there were too many unqualified comments which were missed opportunities to gain from the very generous mark scheme. It is disappointing that candidates often do not refer to line numbers or words, even when the text is printed for them. Candidates needed to read the rubric correctly and focus their answers on the instrumentation and thematic content .

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