

MUSIC

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-15	16-33	34-48	49-59	60-71	72-81	82-100

Standard level group performing

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-14	15-31	32-52	53-63	64-71	72-82	83-100

Standard level solo performing

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-14	15-31	32-49	50-60	61-73	74-85	86-100

Standard level creating

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-15	16-32	33-48	49-60	61-72	73-83	84-100

Solo performing (HL/SLS)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-7	8-11	12-13	14-16	17-18	19-20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

A variety of genres and traditions were featured in the recordings, including considerable attention to the performance of contemporary urban styles (mainly from the American and European continent folk, musical theatre, rock and jazz practices), traditional western arts repertoire and a few less usual practices, including some clearly non western such as a recital of Gu Zheng (Chinese lute).

Most of the candidates were well prepared for their recitals and displayed adequate to very strong achievement levels. There were very few weak submissions this session. A few candidates did not meet the time requirement. Where candidates exceeded it, assessment took place only on the required length as stated in the guide.

It is very important that all schools provide a space where performances can be suitably recorded. Occasionally poor recordings were submitted. The most frequent problems were: the use of out of tune pianos, improper microphone placement/balance of elements in the recording, or the presence of interference noise from faulty recording equipment or other source.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

The majority of submissions featured programmes of clear styles which presented suitable technical challenges. Accompaniment guidelines were not always followed which usually disadvantaged the performer: for instance a solo concerto line played alone. In some cases the accompaniment was not adequately prepared, adding an unnecessary challenge for the candidate. For many others, on the other hand, the accompaniment was attentive, musical and well prepared, providing consistently effective support to candidates' performances.

Criterion B

Generally at least a good standard was delivered in terms of technical control. A few recitals were partially effective. Some schools demonstrated lenient standards in terms of technical preparation, awarding top level marks to performances where pitch and rhythmic inaccuracies interfered with the flow.

Criterion C

Presentations featuring western art genres proved to be the most demanding in terms of the demonstration of stylistic understanding.

Criterion D

Most presentations evidenced effective to highly effective music communication. There were some highly accomplished, engaging and imaginative performances.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Advise candidates to choose repertoire carefully, avoiding presenting pieces clearly beyond their control
- Encourage candidates to include in their presentations a range of exploration in terms of styles and contrast.
- Encourage candidates to select pieces, other than well known standard pieces, that provide evidence of musical interpretation and understanding
- Ensure candidates select an appropriate tempo to avoid the delivery being impaired by much slower or faster tempi than intended.

- Ensure that only one group performance piece is selected for inclusion for assessment, as is the requirement of the guide and that the candidate's part is prominently displayed in the recording
- Provide the best accompaniment experience possible, ensuring that pianos are properly tuned
- Carefully check the recording balance to ensure accompaniments are not too loud or that there is no interfering noise to cover the candidate's performance
- Verify that the final recording displays the candidate's work with clarity prior to assessment and submission
- Make sure all parts of the coversheets are completed in order that candidates are not disadvantaged by lack of programme detail such as composer name or inaccurate timings
- Ensure the pieces are listed on the coversheet in the exact order in which they are submitted on the recording

Group performing (SLG)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-7	8-12	13-14	15-15	16-17	18-20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Overall there was a high standard of work submitted. Some choirs and symphonic bands presented exciting and challenging repertoire. There were also a number of smaller size jazz bands of an extremely proficient standard and it was good to hear some creative solutions for group performance by classes of untrained musicians, including one group which presented idiomatic and well rehearsed selections of folk type songs from within their own culture.

Generally the range of works submitted was varied. There were a few instances where the repertoire chosen was too challenging for the performers in the ensemble. Some schools could have chosen music from a wider range of historical periods, and some choirs would have benefitted from the addition of repertoire from a more diverse group of languages.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

The repertoire chosen was generally very good and most teachers knew the capabilities of their candidates well, choosing appropriate pieces for the technical and musical level of the candidates. There were cases where ensembles were of mixed ability where the repertoire chosen did not suit the whole group. Although there were instances of the programme comprising of only similar styles of repertoire, usually the selected repertoire was interesting and in some cases very exciting. It was encouraging to see some very good candidate compositions being performed as well as excellent arrangements by teachers for their groups.

Criterion B

There were some excellent ensembles in terms of technical proficiency. Technical aspects such as tone production, breath support and intonation in groups such as wind ensembles or choirs appeared to be a main area of weakness for this criterion. This in turn affected the ability of the group to reach the higher levels of technical proficiency. Most groups demonstrated a sustained effort had been made in preparation resulting in few groups being awarded low marks. Teachers are to be commended on the generally thorough level of preparation.

Criterion C

Again, this was an aspect that in most cases is well addressed. It was a pleasure to hear attention to detailed phrasing in classical string orchestra pieces, for example. There were times when those that played the "leading melody line" and those that played the "supporting, more accompanying lines" did not seem to have a clear understanding of their roles within a piece of music; it is recommended that care is taken to ensure that lower parts are well shaped and lighter. It was good to hear confident "soloing" in some jazz ensembles, and an excellent awareness of balance within the better groups

Criterion D

Mostly this criterion was well met with the majority of performances evidencing enthusiastic musical communication. Where marks were lower, there were often confidence issues within the ensemble (for example tentative entries in inner voices in choral groups), or a lack of clear musical intention from within the group.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Continue to work on fundamental technical aspects such a tone development, breath support, dynamic range, intonation and diction to further refine the clarity of ensembles
- Encourage candidates to listen to a wide variety of other recordings of their repertoire and to discuss the performances, in order to better understand the style of the pieces, and also to better understand the communication between performers and audience
- Most teachers applied the criteria thoughtfully and appropriately. At some schools marks were awarded more leniently than in moderation, perhaps as a result of personal experience with the group

Creating (HL/SLC)**Component grade boundaries**

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-11	12-16	17-19	20-23	24-26	27-30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

From the sample work submitted this year a slight increase in overall quality with some interesting explorations into post-tonal techniques and multi-metre was noted. The majority of work submitted was conventional compositions. Few arrangement and improvisation options were seen in the samples. Arrangements that were submitted quite often consisted of little more than transcriptions of the original work into a different musical format without really adding anything or changing the notes or musical characteristics of the original. The guide clearly states that a straightforward transcription is not acceptable and that the arrangement should display originality through deliberate creative decisions as well as manipulation of musical elements. The improvisations submitted were rather mixed, ranging from solo instruments to improvised solos in a group context. The latter were potentially slightly less successful because candidates often tended to be less spontaneous in these group situations.

Some pieces reflected a lack of basic compositional skills, instead seemingly relying on 'trial and error' to complete the work and appearing to have been developed from little guidance or feedback from teachers.

Chorale writing was the most popular of the stylistic techniques options with several examples of figured bass. In both of these genres the level of harmonic understanding was often very weak. Some study of harmonic vocabulary, cadences and part writing and analysis of Bach chorales should be considered as necessary preparation for these techniques.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A – Control and development of musical elements

In general candidates performed well in this criterion. In particular, rhythm and texture were creatively explored. Melody was perhaps the least explored as candidates seemed to prefer to use repetition rather than techniques for melodic development. Harmonic development was also limited as in most cases candidates chose to use established harmonic movement rather than creative exploration.

Criterion B – Musical coherence

Musical coherence was generally well handled – using repetition, contrast and variation. Judicious editing of musical material and content in many cases was needed to maintain interest, variety and unity. In some cases simple (over-) repetition was used in order to arrive at the minimum length of three minutes.

Criterion C – Idiomatic understanding of instruments

This session there was less totally inappropriate or impossible instrumental writing with the understanding of musical instruments being adequate for the most part and candidates generally having some comprehension of range and effect. However the idiomatic nature as well as the technical capabilities of the different instruments could have been explored a little further, and there was a slight mechanical feel to some of the writing, for example, an overuse of single notes in piano lines or left hand parts consisting entirely of root position triads.

Criterion D – Notation/sound quality/spontaneity

Scores were generally clear although the notational aspects could have been more substantive and complete. For example; full performance directions (slurs, staccato markings) and dynamic indications should have been applied to all parts.

Recordings were clear for the most part, if occasionally the music technology tracks were a little mechanical and repetitive sounding. Music Technology recordings were sometimes rather disjunct between sections - sometimes even including awkward silences, reflecting the need for more careful editing.

Criterion E – Impression

Overall the work showed a good sense of communication and commitment. The music portfolios generally made a favourable impression although the improvisational choices and music technology were not always all that successful. Stylistic interpretations were also quite basic.

Criterion F – Reflection

The level of reflections was mixed. Some were excellently detailed while others failed to provide adequate insight into the compositional process and the outcome of the work. Many candidates stated that they thought the work was 'pleasing' or 'successful' without saying why, or what they had learned from the process. The most successful reflections focused on saying something concrete about each stage (intention, process, outcome) of the compositional process.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should be encouraged to explore and experiment creatively with musical elements, and to also to listen and seek inspiration from different music.
- Ensure candidates understand that technology pieces are judged on their use and understanding of software and hardware, and the control and manipulation of sound.
- Encourage candidates to include in their reflections three things: intention, process and outcome.
- Before recording pieces for the portfolio presentations candidates should rehearse the pieces adequately, and perhaps wherever possible also undertake live performances of their work.

Paper 1 (Listening paper) (HL)**Component grade boundaries**

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-20	21-41	42-58	59-70	71-83	84-95	96-140

Paper 1 (Listening paper) (SLS, SLG, SLC)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-13	14-26	27-42	43-53	54-65	66-76	77-100

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for candidates

The listening paper requires candidates to use their knowledge of music as well as their critical thinking skills. It was the latter which seemed to present more challenges to the candidates. Responding to the music examination paper cannot be successfully accomplished by only memorizing concepts. This is especially true for questions three and eight, the two questions which candidates seem to find the most demanding. In the case of question three, candidates seemed to provide concepts that were peripheral to the melody in general. Often the candidates neglected to discuss elements such as pitch and rhythm, both key elements for melody. In the case of question eight, it was surprising in certain cases that some candidates were unable to establish relevant musical links, even when their analysis of the musical excerpts was satisfactory.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

In general, candidates demonstrated good knowledge of the prescribed works. In question one the candidate's usually demonstrated familiarity with the piece. The most successful candidates were capable of establishing a correct and appropriate analysis of the movement on the spot. On the other hand there were candidates whose answers seemed to result from memorized information learned in class. The majority of answers presented for this question were acceptable. The same applies to the knowledge of Mexican elements in "El Salón México".

In section B, the candidates demonstrated good analytical skills with the 'score provided' excerpt. They also demonstrated good contextual knowledge of the jazz excerpt.

The strengths and weaknesses of candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1

Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K. 551 "Jupiter" by W A Mozart

This was a clear-cut question. It was expected that a candidate analyzing "Jupiter" symphony would be able to demonstrate familiarity with sonata form, as was needed for this movement. The answers, in general, ranged from satisfactory to good, with some excellent responses. Nevertheless, there were some responses below these levels and in some cases it appeared

that the candidates were overwhelmed by a score that they had not previously analyzed. In other cases, candidates presented an analysis 'beat by beat' which, while demonstrating certain depth, neglected to analyze the overall structure of the movement.

Question 2

El Salón México by A Copland

Many candidates acknowledged the presence of the Mexican folk songs. In some cases candidates were only able to name and locate these pieces. In cases where responses were more sophisticated, candidates also discussed elements such as orchestration, meter, rhythmic elements, melodic patterns, and motives that better demonstrated an understanding of the Mexican style as used by Copland. In some cases candidates simply established a 'standard' analysis of the piece without connecting their work to a 'Mexican' style. Some candidates named Mexican folk songs but made mistakes locating them; for instance, they described and located "El Palo Verde" when in reality the song was "La Jesusita" or vice versa.

Question 3

Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K. 551 "Jupiter" by W A Mozart and *El Salón México* by A Copland

The responses to this question were not as successful as expected. Often, the candidates discussed peripheral aspects of the melody; for instance, the candidates presented generalizations such as "Mozart presents his melodies at piano dynamic while Copland presents his melodies in forte." In other cases, candidates discussed the use of 'borrowed' melodies or the use of melodies given "as solo" to specific instruments. However, there were few cases where candidates analyzed the melodic intervals or the rhythms that created the melodies. Discussion of pitch and rhythm was absent in the responses of many candidates.

Question 4

Magnificat H. 73 by M A Charpentier (Identified Piece, score provided)

In general good to excellent responses naming elements such as basso continuo, basso ostinato, figured bass, sacred music, canon, imitation, F# minor. Surprisingly, despite the recognition and identification of these elements, some answers placed this excerpt in the Classical period or the Renaissance.

Question 5

Night on the Bare Mountain by M Mussorgsky (Identified piece, no score provided)

Many candidates successfully identified the Romantic period (with some candidates identifying the 'Russian five', the name of the piece and its programme) however, the structure was more elusive. Many candidates embarked upon a 'narration of events' without explaining them or identifying the structure that they created. Surprisingly, many candidates neglected to locate events, which were explicitly requested in the instructions. In an excerpt

where events happen quite quickly, a lack of location makes it difficult for examiners to verify if the candidate's analysis is correct.

Question 6

Mambo (The Snake) arranged by J N Moeketsi (Unidentified Piece, no score provided)

It was certainly encouraging to discover that some candidates identified the 'mbiras' in this piece. Many candidates described these instruments as xylophones or glockenspiels. The identification of polyrhythm was present in many answers, as were 'call and response' and structural elements. Many candidates described this piece as "from the African continent". While this was correct, it was not very precise. Africa is a very large continent and it encompasses many contrasting cultures; candidates are expected to demonstrate awareness of this fact.

Question 7

Restless Feet by A Lundqvist (Unidentified Piece, no score provided)

This was probably the answer where the candidates presented the best responses. The style and period were well identified. Candidates found the instruments easy to recognise (even though some of them described an electric bass instead of a string bass). In many cases the 5/8 meter was identified. The ostinato (walking bass) was also often identified.

Question 8

Here, we had a large number of candidates who embarked upon creating a "compare and contrast" exercise and not an exercise of establishing links. Many candidates established structural links between questions four and seven (ostinato/ground bass, walking bass/basso continuo, instrumental introduction, etc.). Other pieces were also compared with more or less success.

Some candidates chose to compare questions six and seven and did so based on non-musical features such as the roots of jazz linking the African American origin and the 'African' piece. This was contrary to the requirements of the question that asks for musical links.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teaching music is a complicated task. Nevertheless, the majority of teachers seem to be doing this in a satisfactory way. Developing critical thinking in music does not seem to be as present as other aspects of musical knowledge. As stated above, it is not enough for candidates to have only a knowledge of music alone to obtain successful results in the listening paper. Candidates need to go beyond the 'knowledge' of music into 'understanding' of music. Teachers are encouraged to develop activities in class that promote this critical thinking about music. Exercises that develop analysis, comparisons, reflection, and establishing links should assist teachers in this important task.

Further comments

Candidates should understand that a narration of events alone does not demonstrate an understanding of the structural aspect of the excerpts. In general answers that narrate events demonstrate skills in awareness of them, candidates need to go further and to explain the interactions of the events and the form that has been created by them in order to give evidence to their understanding of structure.

Musical Investigation (HL, SLS, SLG, SLC)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-14	15-17	18-20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The range and suitability of the work submitted this session was generally satisfactory with the overall impression that teachers and candidates have arrived at a clearer understanding of what is required for the Musical Links Investigation component. Most candidates presented some degree of analysis and comparison of their chosen musical examples with success.

There is still some confusion over musical cultures, with a number of candidates choosing different genres within the same culture. Many chose links that were not focussed on musical elements, such as similar playing techniques, instrumentation, or social contexts. It was encouraging to see candidates being adventurous in their choices of music from varying cultures.

Presentations were frequently excellent, with the magazine format often serving as a vehicle for creative display. Blogs were enjoyable and very "reader friendly" on the whole.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Candidates' submissions were mostly good with clearly chosen and distinct musical cultures, although there were some candidates who selected music from within the same culture. Musical links were at times weak, or not focussed on musical elements. If candidates aimed to be more specific in their outlining of a musical link, for example rather than just "rhythm" as the link, something that is specific to the rhythm, such as use of syncopation, they could be better equipped to undertake the investigation. Candidates should note that the guide asks for the links to be stated in the introductory part of the written script; this was sometimes overlooked.

Criterion B

Generally candidates made an effort to present an analysis that supported the chosen links. However, it is important that the analysis and comparison of the chosen examples remains

focussed and to the point. It was disappointing when candidates first analysed or described one work, then did the same for the other, followed by a few brief statements offering comparison. It is much more satisfying when a comparative approach is adopted from the outset. At times, candidates failed to provide evidence to support their points, and there was a tendency still for candidates to give a linear description of what happens next in the music, which would not usually fulfil the requirements of the MLI.

The format of the component is a media script and should be marked from the written script alone. Instances of PowerPoint presentations or CDs, have increased and where these contain more content, or substance, than the media script candidates are disadvantaging themselves. Where candidates do submit a CD recording of musical extracts illustrating points raised, it is limited to a maximum time of five minutes in total.

Criterion C

This aspect was mostly well done with the most successful candidates showing confidence in the range and use of appropriate musical terminology. At times it was clear that candidates had gathered a range of vocabulary which was not accurately or successfully applied to the musical elements discussed, but this seemed to be less common.

Criterion D

Too many candidates failed to present a bibliography or discography or to use correct or consistent referencing procedures. This was particularly disappointing when some very good work could not receive a high mark in this criterion due to this oversight. The various media formats were mostly successfully used. In presenting musical evidence, candidates could be reminded that clefs and key signatures are essential pieces of information, too often omitted.

Criterion E

In general the work submitted showed between some and mostly good evidence of the required qualities, with varying levels of depth and engagement of the audience. At times the choice of media format side-tracked the candidate, especially in dramatic presentations where more focus was on "setting the scene" than on content.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Prepare candidates to be able to discuss suitable musical cultures, and how to establish convincing musical links appropriate for sustained investigation (for example, meter, or dynamics are very basic and do not allow for in-depth discussion)
- Teach the processes of analysis and comparison before candidates embark on the investigation
- Ensure candidates understand that the analysis must support the stated links
- Ensure that candidates clearly state the musical links, both on the cover sheet and in the early part of the text
- Make sure that candidates understand the importance of good detailed bibliography and discography and encourage referencing within the text.
- In order to achieve at a high level, candidates must have a very good understanding of the criteria and what is required to succeed.