

Music

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 22	23 - 28	29 - 36

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The essays submitted were mainly suitable. Several essays presented superb research and excellent realization. There was evidence of commendable preparation and supervision of the work of these candidates. A wide variety of topics were submitted for assessment this session. The majority had a defined line of inquiry and involved music study. Most submissions revealed special interest, independent work and commitment. In the communication, structuring and development of the investigations there were variable levels of effectiveness. Very few candidates pursued general, theoretical or tangential research questions that did not involve actual music.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: research question

Research questions were mostly music centered and well-formulated. The topics were not always reflected in the titles, the latter can be more specific. Sometimes the titles were imprecise even though the investigation was focused and specific. Some questions were too broad with too large a field of study (an entire composer's oeuvre, or the impact of an artist on a genre, for example); these generally did not support in-depth evaluation.

Criterion B: introduction

The introduction and abstract sections did not always fulfill their functions. It is important that supervisors and candidates review and develop familiarity with the guide which outlines all of the requirements. Not infrequently, the abstracts missed one or more of its elements (generally the scope or the conclusion). The language and the approach within them was general, sometimes lacking specific information on the music studied and about the findings. In several instances the introduction would not focus on the investigation. The content was aimless and missed the required information. Personal motivation would be, at times, confused with the significance of the investigation. References to existing knowledge were inexistent or tenuous. Topics framed in an academic context with their significance clearly articulated were rare.

Criterion C: investigation

The investigations were, in the main, carefully planned with effective use of primary and secondary sources. Several candidates demonstrated sound aural skills effectively listening and writing out

scores where there were none, to support their observations. Less successful investigation used only general references or included irrelevant interviews, or information gathered from unreliable sources.

Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

This criterion proved problematic for candidates. Essays that produced a meaningful dialogue between the line of inquiry and existing knowledge were few. Not infrequently arguments lacked chronological/geographical/social-historic contextual information demonstrating an inappropriate informal approach to the task, and limited potential against this criterion. It is clear that candidates do not all grasp the importance of presenting their study within an academic context.

Criterion E: reasoned argument

Most arguments were reasonable with logical development. A few candidates struggled with spelling, grammar and basic communication issues which sometimes impacted coherence and understanding.

Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject

There was commendable musical analysis at times. Candidates worked diligently and identified, and selected material from primary sources, and created transcriptions, when necessary, as well as evaluating the music. Complex musical topics were handled effectively with maturity and sophistication.

Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject

Score excerpts, are still presented at times without clefs, key signatures or precise location.

Criterion H: conclusion

This section was not always effectively articulated. Though most essays presented a conclusion the information in the section did not always meet the expected objectives. The conclusion should relate the topic of investigation to the evidence and arguments presented in the essay. A new closing synthesis of the topic should emerge as it is now presented in light of the particular research completed. Similarly, unresolved questions should be included when these have arisen from the investigation, that is, when the research process has prompted them. Not infrequently some new issues may be raised that do not relate to the line of inquiry in any clear or significant manner. This generally causes in coherence.

Criterion I: formal presentation

The referencing of the music resources was sometimes meticulous and often inconsistent. The differences between a discography and a bibliography need clarification. The sections often listed more entries than necessary or lacked works cited in the essays. General presentation ranged from satisfactory to excellent

Criterion J: abstract

Abstracts have different requirements to introductions and conclusions, and serve different purposes. The guide clearly explains what is expected of them. Abstracts are too frequently erroneously written as an introduction.

Criterion K: holistic judgement

Candidates demonstrated little to considerable evidence of intellectual initiative, depth of understanding and insight. Again, there were some superb essays that showed commendable preparation and achievement

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Some candidates would benefit from clarification on the nature and requirements of academic research, as well as increased familiarity with the requirements of the EE as outlined in the guide, both generically and subject-specifically. Candidates would benefit from being able to differentiate between defence of personal views, personal reporting, anecdotal writing, journalistic writing and opinion papers. Academic context and its importance should be emphasized to students and why it is relevant to research. Candidates should always be reminded of the concept of intellectual property and the importance of the responsible documentation of the sources for all ideas and evidence used in an investigation. When preparing the essay, candidates should be encouraged to be specific and avoid making vague or general assumptions. Specificity assists to maintain clarity and focus and candidates should be reminded of this. Candidates should ensure that music illustrations have all necessary signs and information, and that location and sources are indicated with precision. Abstracts, introductions and conclusions have different purposes and must clearly communicate what is expected of them which is outlined in the EE guide. The former section is often erroneously written as an introduction. The conclusion should present a new synthesis of the topic in light of the evidence evaluated.