

Examiners' Report  
June 2012

GCE Music 6MU06 01

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June 2012

Publications Code UA032736

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## **Introduction**

In this third year of operation of the current specification it is pleasing to report that overall standards have been maintained, if not improved, particularly in the first question.

The following figures are based on the on-line marking statistics as it is not possible to include 'whitemail' submissions (i.e. those scripts which have to be marked in hard copy form).

Candidates are required to answer two out of the three available options in Question 3. 67% of all candidates answered Q 3 (a); 85% Q 3 (b) and 49% Q 3 (c).

One option of the two available has to be answered in Q 4, and here 45% answered (a) and 55% (b).

A few rubric infringements have been recorded, and candidates should be reminded that they must not enter their answers on any other page(s) than the one allocated for the question. If they need to write more than the space in the examination booklet allows, they should use separate sheets of paper provided for the purpose.

## Question 1 (a)

The excerpts for Question 1 were taken from Stravinsky's opera *The Rake's Progress*, and thus related to the same composer's *Pulcinella Suite*, another neo-classical work, prescribed for study in the Applied Music Section.

Responses to Question 1 in general were much more successful this year, with many candidates gaining marks in the upper ranges, a few scoring full marks.

In Section 1(a), relatively few candidates failed to name two instruments.

## Question 1 (b)

Most candidates succeeded in naming the device. Those who failed perhaps did not notice the key words 'harmonic' and 'throughout', offering such answers as syncopation, broken chord, appoggiatura and suspension.

## Question 1 (c)

This question produced a wide range of responses, with many candidates making four credit-worthy points or more while others struggled to make one or two. Less successful candidates rarely went beyond differentiating between male and female singers and evidently experienced difficulties in distinguishing between syllabic and melismatic word-setting. Another frequently encountered fault was a concentration on the role of the orchestra, rather than the vocal writing as such. Some of the less successful candidates failed to make clear which excerpt they were writing about, and there was frequent misuse of the term antiphony in relation to Excerpt B. It was noticeable that even the more successful candidates sometimes could not name the type of voices correctly, the baritone in excerpt A often being described as a tenor, and the soprano in Excerpt B as an alto.

This answer received no marks as it is too vague.

(c) Comment on the vocal writing in the excerpts. (4)

- vocals are not very syllabic
- vocals supported by accompaniment
- vocals have different melody from the accompaniment
- vocals kept to a limited range



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

No attempt is made to identify the 'vocals', nor does the candidate differentiate between the excerpts. There would have been a mark available had the excerpt with a limited range been identified.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

In a comparison question, be sure to specify which excerpt is being described.

## Question 1 (d)

It is disturbing that so few candidates successfully identified the extract as a sarabande, particularly as a sarabande had been one of the works studied the previous year for Unit 3. Some of the wilder answers included gigue, pavane, gavotte and galliard.

Though a reasonable number of candidates identified the work as an opera, not as many as might have been expected opted for Stravinsky, all the more surprising as another neo-classical work by the composer had been studied this year. There was a marked preference for Gershwin, presumably in view of the language in which it was sung.

## Question 2 (a)

The excerpt for Question 2 was taken from the slow movement from Mozart's Piano Concerto in E flat, K. 482, relating to the same composer's Piano Sonata, K. 333, in the Instrumental Music Section.

Question 2 remains perhaps the most challenging part of the examination for most candidates. The dictation test, in spite of its slow tempo, was rarely answered completely correctly, with many candidates gaining marks in the region of 4-5 out of 8. Typically, rhythmic values were correct as far as the last two notes, where the length of the next to last note caused particular difficulties. Pitches, on the other hand, were often wildly incorrect. In these instances, it was clear that candidates failed to take into account the surrounding context and in particular the rising sequence at the start. Little heed was taken of the modulation, and the repetition of pitch in bar 4.

This attempt was almost completely correct.

**2 AURAL AWARENESS**

You will hear an excerpt of music **five** times. The playings will be separated by pauses and the length of each pause will be announced.

In order to answer the questions you should also have the separate skeleton score.

(a) Write out the melody line of bars 17 to 22 (beat 2). You may work in rough on the skeleton score, but you **must** copy your answer onto the staff below. (8)



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The A in bar 2 required a natural as the music here was moving from C minor to G minor. It was a shame that the lengths of the last two notes were incorrect.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Keep counting the pulse to help you estimate the length of longer notes, especially in slower-moving extracts.

This question gained half marks.

## 2 AURAL AWARENESS

You will hear an excerpt of music **five** times. The playings will be separated by pauses and the length of each pause will be announced.

In order to answer the questions you should also have the separate skeleton score.

- (a) Write out the melody line of bars 17 to 22 (beat 2). You may work in rough on the skeleton score, but you **must** copy your answer onto the stave below.

(8)



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The rhythm was almost entirely correct, with only the last two lengths wrong. Only one pitch was correct, the implications of the modulation to G minor being overlooked.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Keep counting, and be aware of the context.

### **Question 2 (b) (i)**

Many candidates identified the cadence, and a good number succeeded in naming the key.

### **Question 2 (b) (ii)**

Identification of the key sometimes caused problems, with many candidates selecting G minor. The chords were only rarely identified successfully. Some lost the mark for Chord A because they failed to specify that the diminished chord was a seventh, while others who realised that B was a tonic chord failed to identify the inversion.

### **Question 2 (b) (iii)**

There were many correct responses, though some thought the device was an accented passing note or else a suspension.

### **Question 2 (b) (iv)**

There were many correct responses, though too many believed it was a perfect cadence.

### **Question 3 (a)**

Many candidates revealed a sound knowledge of the circumstances of performance and/or composition, and of the general background of all the works specified in Question 3.

In 3a, there was evident awareness of the power and wealth of Venice at the time of the composition of Gabrieli's work. Many candidates showed a good understanding of the progressive aspects of the work, and were able to provide examples to demonstrate their argument. In weaker responses, the problem usually arose from uncertainty as to what exactly was a progressive feature, with the result that minor details of the score were listed in the hope that they would somehow fit the demands of the question. In these cases, there was often an increasingly desperate repetition of the question's wording (e.g. 'showing that Venice was an extremely wealthy and powerful city state'). Confusion over antiphony and imitation was also evident, and monody was too often inappropriately described as melody-dominated homophony.

### Question 3 (b)

This, the most popular option, was answered with evident enthusiasm. Many candidates successfully listed the relevant points and illustrated them appropriately. Some problems arose from the absence of a key signature and the belief that clusters of accidentals automatically resulted in chromaticism. Some candidates fell back on the expression 'fast-paced', used in the question itself, but neglected to mention that the musical tempo indication was Allegro. Ornaments were sometimes confused (appoggiatura given for acciaccatura), and contrasts were ineffectually demonstrated. A frequent example of this featured bar 15 and its low register writing. Unfortunately a large number of candidates failed to drive home the point, neglecting to say how it contrasted with the surrounding music. While many candidates knew that Auric exploited tertiary shifts of key, not all of them offered an appropriate example.

This is an example of an answer scoring full marks.

(b) *Passport to Pimlico* (1948): *The Siege of Burgundy* was composed to accompany a fast-moving sequence of events in a comedy film. Explain how Auric creates this sense of pace and mood.

(13)

'Passport to Pimlico' is meant to accompany fast-changing events on screen, and so Auric creates this through fast-moving episodic music. Phrases only last for 2 or 4 bars, and the instrumentation and key often change with the phrases to keep the music going. For example in bar 16 Auric uses several forces together - strings, woodwind, bassoon and basses, but changes in the next bar to only low-pitched instruments - bassoons, cellos and basses, moving the music on quickly. In bars 27 to 28, Auric bases his harmony on the whole tone scale whereas elsewhere he used some diatonic harmony, such as in the opening bars, and sometimes some chromaticism. Auric also uses rhythm to keep the pace and mood; in the opening 4 bars he starts with a rhythm which is then in diminution, to create a sense of gathering pace. He also uses predominantly semiquaver movement throughout the piece - the only places where this is not used is bars 1, 14 and 49-54. Auric also uses unprepared sevenths in this work, for example in bar 64 last quaver beat, where an F# is used unexpectedly. Auric also uses the music to depict humorous moments on screen. In bar 55 he uses the unusual combination of piccolo and celeste with grace notes.

Furthermore, the only instance of a minor key is during a screen showing government talks here Auric uses B minor in bar 19 to show

the seriousness of the talks. The music is also kept at a fast tempo apart ~~one~~ from one bar (bar 20), where it is slowed to *pizz. andante*. Auric also uses tremolandi in the violas in bars 52 and 53. Moreover, Auric reserves the use of loud percussion for a climax point in bars 49 and 50. Auric also makes frequent use of drugging chords in the strings.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiners' Comments**

'Basic' credit was given for episodic, frequent key changes, chromaticism.

Illustrated points were given for contrasts of instrumentation, whole-tone harmony, rhythmic diminution, predominantly semiquaver movement, F#, combination of piccolo and celeste, grace-notes, fast tempo and tempo change, string tremolandi.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Even in this excellent response, not all the points that could have been illustrated were. Always keep giving examples.

### Question 3 (c)

Those candidates who attempted this option were for the most part well able to give valid examples of context, rhythm and performance practice. Weaker answers usually suffered from a failure to illustrate the basic point, or else a tendency to give a recital of random facts in the hope that this alone would suffice. It was not enough, for example, to refer to muting (which after all is described in the introduction at the head of the score) without relating it to the idea of 'talking' drums and communication with the other participants in the performance.

This answer was deemed 'adequate', scoring 6/13, and is an example of a bullet-point answer, permitted in question 3.

(c) Describe *Agbekor Dance*, referring to its social context, use of rhythm, and performance practice.

(13)

- In the Sogo part the simple quaver pattern is metrically displaced at bar 3
- The pitches of the Soga and Atsimevu parts are approximate and all the instruments are percussion which makes this a strange piece to listen to for European people
- There is use of cross rhythms such as at bar 42
- The ~~entire~~ piece is polyrhythmic throughout again a good bar that really represents this is bar 42
- The Atsimevu part has the most rhythmically devices, such as double dotting at bar 8

- It also includes unusual accents at bars 14 - 16
- Triplets at bar 41
- Ties at bar 44 - 45 and because the note is tied over the bar it's harder to stay in rhythm
- Irregular rhythms are also a key feature as can be seen throughout the piece
- This piece was used as a war dance but now it is mostly used to play for tourists



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**Examiner Comments**

This candidate received credit for the following basic points: polyrhythmic, war-dance and the fact that it is now played for tourists. The illustrated points were for metrical displacement in the sogo part, use of cross-rhythms and double dotted rhythms.

This was a good answer, displaying both sound factual knowledge and quality of written communication.

(c) Describe Agbekor Dance, referring to its social context, use of rhythm, and performance practice.

(13)

Agbekor Dance is traditionally performed by the Ewe people of Ghana as a war dance, and can be performed before or after a battle. It is performed by skilled drummers who are held in high esteem within the community. ~~it is~~ The gankogui, or bell, plays an ostinato rhythm throughout the piece which never changes - it is the first of the instruments to start playing and is the foundation against which all other rhythms react. The abimevu is the second instrument to start playing and is considered the master drum - it is played by the most skilled of the players. Although it starts with a simple rhythm which seems syncopated against the gankogui, the abimevu part grows in complexity to show off the master drummer's skill. It uses a mixture of quavers, semiquavers, and a few dotted rhythms (found in bars 32 and 35), and triplets (in bars 41 and 42). The sogo is the third instrument to start playing and begins its rhythm one quaver into the bar in bar 3, giving it a displaced effect. Similar to the abimevu, the sogo part uses more complex rhythms as the piece goes on, although not as difficult as the abimevu - ~~it~~ the sogo sticks to a mainly quaver rhythm except for some semiquaver movement (beginning of bar 6) and the occasional dotted rhythm (bar 13, South crotchet beat). At one stage the sogo and abimevu complement each other by taking the same rhythm in bars 14 to 16, although the abimevu still incorporates semiquavers on the final quaver beats.

of the bar. There is only one instance of homorhythm where all the instruments are playing the same rhythm together - that is in the final four quavers of the piece in bar 45 to end. For the rest of the time the 3 parts play different rhythms. This gives the effect of cross-rhythms and reflects the context of a war dance, as it gives the piece a sense of conflict.



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### Examiner Comments

This candidate made the following 'basic' points: war dance; preparation for battle; drummers held in high esteem; play different rhythms (=polyrhythm). Illustrated points were: ostinato; time-line in gankogui (line against which all other rhythms react); syncopation; dotted rhythms; triplets; sogo's displacement; homorhythm at end.

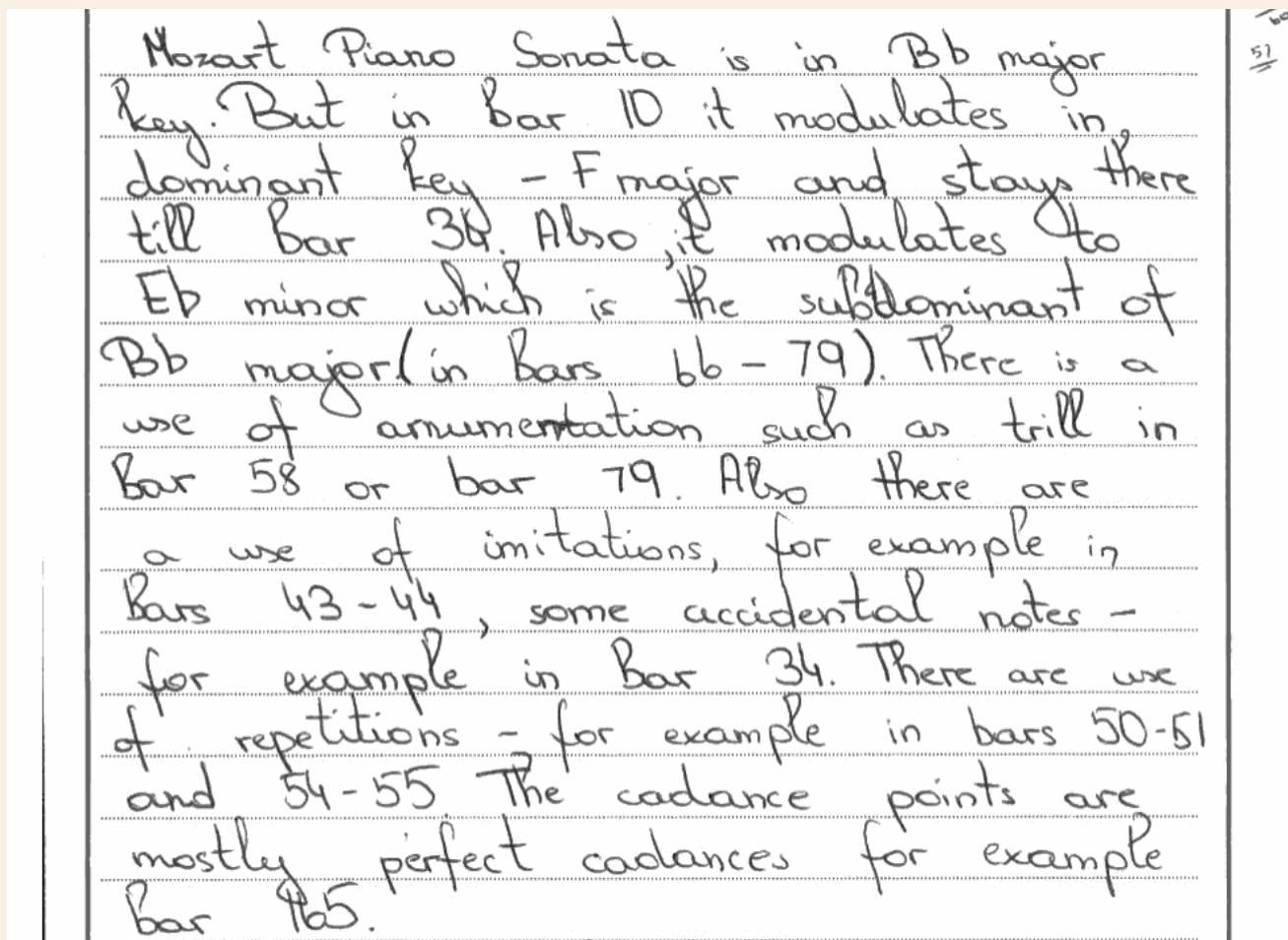
## Question 4 (a)

It is pleasing to report that the standard of essay writing and written communication was generally high this year. There was evidence of planning, and candidates often provided introductions and conclusions. Indeed, in some cases, these sections were perhaps over-extended.

In both options, there was often an organisational problem in that both areas for discussion could be so closely related, that if dealt with separately there was sometimes considerable duplication. For example, perfect cadences were often mentioned under both harmony and tonality. It is a difficult decision to make right at the outset of the planning stage, but there may well be occasions when it is more profitable to deal with the composer's approach to both topics together. Even in the second option, it proved all too easy to repeat material, in that a melody can be considered as part of the texture as well as being an element in its own right.

In Question 4(a), there were many excellent, well-substantiated accounts of tonality and harmony in the works prescribed in this question. The most common faults typically arose from excessively abstract descriptions of sonata form, with little reference to specific keys and bar numbers, and a misuse of 'chromatic' in accounts of Shostakovich's Quartet. Here melodic chromaticism was often given, incorrectly, as an example of chromatic harmony. There were also a number of candidates who overlooked the presence of cadences in the quartet. Descriptions of suspensions in the Corelli were not totally secure, and with regard to the Mozart Sonata, some candidates strayed into purely textural matters (i.e. Alberti bass and octaves).

This brief answer is an example of a weaker response. There is no attempt at an introduction, and such relevant information as there is presented in a random manner.



The Trio Sonata written by Arcangelo Corelli is mostly diatonic ~~what~~ and have only one modulation. The key in which this piece starts and finishes is D major. Violins mostly move together, although there is a call and response motif between

between violin I, violin II and violone in bars 11-14. There is also an imitation between violin I and violin II in bars 37-38.

String quartet starts in E<sub>b</sub> major. In this piece there are loads of expressions for example in bar 11 there is a use of *diminuendo* and in bar 13 *sf pp* → *pp*. There is a use of short scodic movement in bars 28-30. Mostly there are perfect cadences for example 124. Use of many passing and accidental notes.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

This candidate received credit for two basic points (mostly diatonic Corelli and the fact that there are perfect cadences in the Shostakovich quartet) and for two illustrated points (modulation to F major in Mozart and the located perfect cadence in the same work).



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

Write a brief introduction and keep to the point.

This extract is the opening of an outstanding response which scored 35/36.

In this essay I will comparing and contrasting the use of harmony and tonality in three pieces: Arcangelo Corelli's 'Trio Sonata in D, Op. 3 No. 2: movement IV', Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's 'Sonata in Bb, K. 333: movement I', and Dmitry Shostakovich's 'String Quartet No. 8, Op. 110: movement I'.

Corelli's ~~Trio Sonata~~ Trio Sonata uses functional harmony which is defined by perfect cadences, for example the perfect cadence in ~~D~~ in bars 9-10. The music is entirely diatonic, as all accidentals are related to a change of key. The harmony is mostly consonant, and uses mainly root position and first inversion chords, for example C# first inversion in bar 8. Dissonances are created through the use of carefully prepared suspensions, such as the 4-3 suspension on an A major chord, played by violin II in bar 40. Corelli also uses pedal notes, for example the inverted pedal in bars 15-17 by violin II.



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**Examiner Comments**

The introduction is undeniably basic, but it is clear from the following paragraph that the candidate was able to present relevant information clearly and efficiently.

## Question 4 (b)

There were many full answers to this question, and a generally sound knowledge of melodic procedures in Rag Bhairav was demonstrated. Descriptions of texture in *Pavana Lachrimae* sometimes suffered from uncertainty about what was truly contrapuntal and what not, as well as a mix-up of antiphony and imitation in the central sections of the work. A number of candidates referred to this work's two-part texture, when they clearly meant that it was written on two staves.

Textures in the Berlioz symphony were usually accurately described in broad terms, but more specific details of orchestral textures in the 'Serenade' section were seldom full enough to gain credit. There is also some confusion over where exactly the *Idée fixe* occurs, many incorrectly placing it at the upbeat to bar 35 with the *cor anglais* theme.

In this case, the candidate provided a brief plan.

	Corelli Sweelinck	Mozart Harold	Shost. Rag
4/20	✓ Melody Dom	✓ Melody dom non	• 3 part - <del>enhancers</del> thickened symph.
	✓ 4 part - vocals 3-24	✓ octave doubling	• scalar runs - Tars.
Tex	✓ Call + response Canon imitation - concentrate Free counterpoint	✓ drone/pedal / tonic + dom / bagpipe	• Thin at start.
	.	.	
	.		
4/20	Free transcriptions Flow my tears D minor / A major	✓ Salterelo theme	Tars - scales Rag - Dawn wa + Pa.
	✓ variations	✓ Harold's theme	✓ Gamak - vib
Mel	✓ 2 + 1/2 octave rise	✓ Serenade theme	✓ Suti - micro
	✓ 6 parts Figural variation	✓ Fragmented	✓ Meeds - slider
	.	✓ Chromatic	✓ Free improvisation
	.		✓ Mukrah - melody signals more on.

Sweetlink <sup>wrote a</sup> ~~is a~~ stately dance written for harpsichord. It is a piece based on 'Flow my tears' by Dowland. Harold in Italy is a piece based on the poem 'Child Harold' by Lord Byron. Rag Bhairav is a traditional Indian piece which isn't normally notated ~~as~~ as it is taught ~~and~~ orally.

The melody in the A, B and C sections are free transcriptions of Dowland's song 'Flow my tears'. The A section ~~is~~ is bar 1-16, B is 33-48 and C is 65-81. ~~The~~ Sweetlink creates variation sections instead of the original repeats, A1 (bar 17-32), B1 (bar 49-64) and C1 (bar 82-98). The melody in the A, B, and C sections move in step or small intervals with the variations doing the same but using semiquavers instead of quavers. The semiquavers are used to embellish the melody at cadence points, such as in bars 61-64. In bar 28<sup>3</sup> to 30<sup>2</sup>, a 2 and a half octave scale rise is played which decorates the original melody. Figural variation is also present in the variation sections, A1, B1 and C1, as Sweetlink decorated ~~the~~ Dowland's original melody.

~~The~~ Berlioz's piece is based around an Idee Fixe which is ~~used~~ <sup>fragmented</sup> to create different themes. At bar 4, the salterello theme is played on the piccolo and Oboe.

which was inspired by <sup>Italian</sup> folk music. The melody is accompanied by a tonic/dominant pedal which is meant to sound like Italian bagpipes, also inspired by the folk music. At bar 34, the serenade theme is played on the cor anglais. This theme is then fragmented to create Harold's theme at bar 65. The melody is diatonic with chromatic tendencies, for example in bars 53-57. The melodies are also embellished with acciaccaturas (bar 27 in piccolo) and trills (bar 120 in piccolo).

The melody in the Rag is played on the ~~sarangi~~ Sarangi, an instrument with 3 main strings and up to 35 strings that vibrate in sympathy. It is bowed or plucked. In the  $\text{♩}$  Alap, the Sarangi explore the notes of the rag, <sup>in free improvisation</sup> which is a series of pitches that are similar to a scale. Rag Bhairavi is a morning or dawn rag. In the rag there is the Sa and Pa which act as a tonic and dominant (C and G), but aren't because it isn't tonal music. The melody is embellished in a number of ways such as gamak, which means vibrato, sruti, which means microtonal inflection of pitch and can be seen at 22<sup>nd</sup>, and lastly meends which are slides, and can be seen at 1' represented by the line. The mukhra (3<sup>rd</sup>) is a melodic symbol to represent a new section. In the Jhalla section, series of Tans are used which are rapid scalar runs.

The texture of the Saregama ~~with~~ is <sup>mainly</sup> melody dominated homophony and is mainly in 4 parts, however there is a 3 part section at bar 24. The 4 part texture represents vocal lines (soprano, alto, tenor and bass). Call and response is used at bar 17-18, concentrated imitation is at bar 42-45 and canon happens at 49 to 52. It is also in free counter-point. It is thicker in the variation sections due to the semiquaver runs, such as bar in bar 23.

The texture of Berlioz is also <sup>mainly</sup> melody dominated homophony. The melody is accompanied by a series of pedals, such as the tonic/dominant pedal at bar 1 in the clarinets. ~~Also~~ The cello plays an ostinato from 71 until 95. The texture is also thickened by the octave doubling of the melody between the piccolo and oboe at bar 4.

The texture of Rag Bhairav is 3 parts and becomes increasingly thick towards the Thalla section at 19' because of the entrance of the tabla drums. The tital is a 16 beat rhythmic cycle that is made up of vibhags and a contrasting vibhag, Khali which is the third section.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Such a plan is sufficient to help the candidate organise the essay clearly. It does not have to be 'wordy' (there are instances of some candidates needlessly writing out an essay twice, with virtually no differences between the plan and the essay proper).



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Examiners always check plans to ensure that credit-worthy points that may not have made it into the essay proper are taken into account.

## **Paper Summary**

It is hoped that the following tips will prove helpful to teachers and their candidates.

In Q. 1 comparison questions, be sure to indicate which excerpt of music you are writing about.

In questions 1 and 2, when selecting dates of composition, types of work and composers, it may be helpful to remember that the excerpts chosen by the examiners will relate to works you have studied for the 'Music in Context' and 'Continuity and Change' Areas of Study.

In Q. 2 (a), particularly if the extract is slow-moving, take care to count the pulse to help you estimate the length of longer notes.

In Q. 2 (a), take care to match up the beginning and end of the melody with the surrounding context.

In Q 3, you can answer in bullet points, and should not expect to write an extensive preamble.

In Q 4, it may be helpful to set out the lines of enquiry briefly, but an extensive introduction will probably not gain very many marks, and may prove to be a waste of time.

In essay writing, try to avoid repetition.

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