MUSIC

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-15	16-32	33-47	48-57	58-67	68-77	78-100

Standard level group performing

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-14	15-30	31-51	52-60	61-66	67-76	77-100

Standard level solo performing

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-14	15-30	31-48	49-58	59-69	70-78	79-100

Standard level creating

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-15	16-31	32-47	48-57	58-67	68-77	78-100

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

The Solo Performance submissions demonstrated a good range of achievement levels, where a large number fared between apt and outstanding in achievement.

In a good number of cases the technical and artistic challenges in the programs selected were considerable. Up to par were the motivation, preparation and engagement of the candidates who were positively supported in meticulously honing the necessary skills to diligently pursue mastery and delivery. These approaches produced several performances of impressive range and depth in the musical understanding on the part of the candidates. Piano recitals of exceptional artistic quality predominated, yet there were some outstanding submissions in other performing media where high levels are seldom achieved like Percussion, Guitar, Brass and Wood wind instruments and Double Bass recital.

Most recordings were of quality with apt microphone placement and balance so that the work of the candidate was displayed with prominence and suitable accompaniment. Some schools do need to ensure that the accompanists can play the music material. In a few cases inconsistencies in the accompanists' performance or accompaniment in out of tune pianos deterred from the candidate's work.

Studio manipulation or editing of performances, or of any of their elements, are not permitted for IB Performance submissions. Each recording is to be from a live performance. Suspicion of tampering with submissions has been reported in a few submissions from the past few sessions. The integrity of a candidate's performance, was in a few instances debatable. One submission presented strikingly different performance capabilities as the work of the same individual; in another tuning and tone quality appeared manipulated through studio intervention. The submissions were reported to the appropriate channels for further investigation.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

The repertoire was often thoughtfully chosen, presenting interesting musical explorations, substantial and out of the ordinary in content, expressive and technical demands.

Overall, the choices of program were well matched to the capabilities of the students. There was appropriate variety and some interesting pieces presented. On the other hand, some

submissions consisted of several short pieces. These not always support the candidates in their demonstration of musical skill or communication abilities.

Criterion B

The technical aspects of many of the performances were of a high standard. Mostly, the pieces matched the capabilities of the candidates. There were several instances where able candidates were given pieces that were beyond their means. It was unfortunate to hear able, musical candidates struggling to demonstrate technical control.

Phrasing, dynamics and tone colour subtleties were considered in most of the pieces. Several performances showed a real understanding of structure, with clear definition in the roles of musical lines and textures within the pieces. Some other performances were more functional, and did not really consider the importance of these aspects.

Criterion C

There was a range of understanding of musical styles. From indistinct readings where no style was apparent to nuanced and informed renderings. There was stylistic variety in most submissions, and most candidates showed some understanding.

Criterion D

Musical communication was evident at a variety of levels from some to highly consistent and mature. There were instances of impressive communication of musical intent and understanding.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

There is most effective guidance and practice for Solo Performance in a good number of the schools this session. A good number of performances demonstrated intelligent musical understanding, maturity and flair. Commendation to the teachers on their approach is clearly due for much extraordinary work!

Some other centres appear much less involved in the support of the component and in the understanding of what is necessary. At times, issues of integrity in the submissions have surfaced.

Submissions ought to unequivocally present a candidate's performance work. It is important the course teacher is present and supervises recordings or otherwise verifies the integrity of each and all the submissions. No studio editing of performance elements or submissions of unclear origin are to be allowed.

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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

The range of submissions leaned towards the high side of the range. However, it must be said that this was a rather small amount of submissions. The quality of recordings continues to improve with the advances in technology. Most of the school ensembles showed commitment and enthusiasm and must be commended for this. All the schools followed the requirements of the IB Music Guide in terms of time and homogeneity of the ensemble. Teachers offered in general sensible comments and descriptions of their groups. These comments were very useful to understand the nature of the groups presented.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

In general, there was an appropriate selection of repertory presented by the ensembles. There was only one case where the repertoire selected was slightly beyond the capabilities of the performers. While most of the ensembles presented a variety in the repertory, this often was limited to offer variety in tempo or character of the compositions. At times ensembles presented pieces from only one period of music, for instance the Romantic period.

Criterion B

The technical capabilities demonstrated by the ensembles were in general from quite satisfactory to excellent. Intonation was probably the area that needs more work even though there appears to be some improvement from previous years. Another aspect that also needs some attention is the uniformity in the string sections/ensembles in relation to the articulation (bow strokes). Some of the high brass sections had also some minor problems with intonation, especially in the high partials.

Criterion C

Overall, the groups could demonstrate a good understanding of the musical style of each piece. However, as stated before, in some instances groups confined themselves to a limited variety of repertory.

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Criterion D

Communication was appropriate in most of the submissions. Schools presenting multiple performances taken over the course of the year were in general the ablest to communicate musical intent and collaboration. However, where the repertory was slightly challenging, phrasing and other aspects of communication were proportionally neglected.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

There is an immense repertory for ensembles. Teachers/directors are encouraged to explore more contrasting musical periods to be included in their submissions. This will enrich the artistic development of their students.

Please insist on the need to unify articulation within the different sections of the ensembles. A unified ensemble is key to reach high marks.

Further comments

A recommendation to teachers is to please be more careful in filling in the 6/MGP form: timings, comments, correct order of pieces. Examiners sometimes need to spent unnecessary time in understanding the submissions.

Some of the recordings included unwanted noises or people speaking. This distracts from the task of assessing an ensemble.

It is advised to split the recordings in tracks. This allows the assessment team to better listen to the recordings.

The selection of 'demanding' repertory beyond the capabilities of the ensemble rarely results in high grades. Teachers are invited to carefully select the ensemble's repertory that best matches the group's capabilities.

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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

Compositions remain the most popular option, with music technology and arrangements following in about equal measure. There was a slight increase in candidates offering stylistic techniques in this session, while improvisations were rare.

The work was quite varied in quality, from mediocre through good, to very good. There were very few very poor submissions. The range of marks was broadly from 15 to 30 with the majority concentrated in the middle from 20 to 25.

With stylistic techniques, the more popular options chosen were the Bach chorale, two part 18th C counterpoint, and the twelve-tone exercise. With the chorale, some candidates showed a better understanding of the task than in previous sessions, whereas a minority still showed little or no preparation for the task.

Some candidates did not seem to have understood the stylistic techniques task, approaching it freely as, for example, a composition "in baroque style" and not adhering to the requirements for imitation, modulation etc. Particularly noticeable in this category were exercises in 18th C counterpoint.

Also, some responses failed to state clearly the origin of the given material (some of which may not have been authentic) and to identify where the student's work began.

There was one figured bass exercise without the numbers over the bass line.

Twelve tone exercises showed some creativity, although some were very mechanical. There appears to have been little aesthetic/stylistic preparation for these exercises, which were often treated as a mathematic exercise.

The original versions upon which arrangements were based were rarely included in the portfolios.

A few candidates chose to present single compositions in two or more movements. Although this is not prohibited, it should be remembered that having two or more movements in the three to six minutes allowed can lead to a lack of development of material, and the risk of a lack of continuity in the whole. Two contrasting pieces presented as separate movements of the same composition will therefore risk scoring less than one piece of the same (combined) length.

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Arrangements were clearly divided between those which reassigned given material to a new instrumentation and those which chose to create a new context; the latter generally scoring better.

Music technology creations were mostly adequate, with a few strong submissions.

Some candidates chose to emulate simplistic video game themes. Although it is understood that the recreation of a "vintage" sound can be interesting, it should be remembered that the examiner is still looking to reward creative use of musical elements and their development.

Electronic pieces were usually well structured, but sometimes made too much use of repetition rather than developing the material.

There were fewer recordings of pop songs presented as music technology creations in this session.

Improvisations tended to be jazz or rock solos to a backing track. The playing was generally competent but often routine, following the chord changes, with a lack of any real risk taking.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Most candidates showed satisfactory competence in their handling of musical elements, with only a small minority showing some lack of preparation. Higher scoring pieces included creative use of dynamics and tone colour, as well as competence in creating workable musical textures. Those who included key change or modulation were usually among these higher scorers.

Melodic ideas were sometimes developed to their full possibilities, although some candidates relied on repeating sections to (apparently) fill the required time element. Repetition is a development technique, but candidates who used repetition with some slight variation/development rather than straight copy and paste, scored better.

Most candidates seemed to have some grasp of triadic harmony, and higher scorers could create functional musical textures, and write bass lines that gave direction to harmony.

Criterion B

Good marks were attained by candidates who had made some effort to think through the structure and identity of the piece. Some marks were lost in criterion B due to work being discontinuous.

There was generally good structural coherence, when employing pre-established formulae (song, classical forms for example).

Some pieces suffered from over repetition of the same ideas, creating unity but sacrificing interest. Some music technology creations fell into this category.

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Criterion C

There was mostly competent and correct use of musical instruments and software.

There were some examples of excellent idiomatic writing for instruments, and totally inappropriate writing was rare.

Drum parts although usually functional, often lacked variety and personalisation. It was quite common to see the same basic pattern repeated, copy and paste, throughout the piece, when some variety - moving to the ride cymbal for the chorus of a pop song or and creating a drum fill at the end of a phrase, would have given the work more vitality.

Some pieces included instrumental passages that were "playable" only via computer simulation- it was clear here that the sound was being used without any real knowledge of the actual instrument.

More successful examples were where the student had worked together with real performers or was writing for an instrument he knew well.

In technology compositions, some more could have been done in creative sound manipulation. There were in this session slightly more examples of the use and manipulation of field recordings, some of which showed a good level of creativity.

In improvisations, the higher scorers made full use of the range and characteristics of their instruments, less effective improvisations stayed in a "comfort zone" and produced little that was idiomatic.

Criterion D

Notation continues to improve with each session, and was generally good to very good. A common weak point remains forgetting to present transposing instruments' parts in the appropriate key.

Almost all scores are produced on computers now, but a few are still produced by hand. There is obviously no penalty for this, but the handwritten scores presented tended to be unclear, and even incomplete.

Essential directions for performance were occasionally missing i.e., the opening tempo and dynamics of a piece.

Pieces obtaining less than average marks usually had some fundamental problems with notation – such as incorrect bar lines or time signatures

Phrase markings and articulation were often absent, and although this may be considered fine detail, it was often fundamental to the character of the pieces

Regarding technology compositions, while it is true that many teenagers have some level of competency in manipulating the equipment and technology, very few seem to be able to apply this fully to the creation of their musical work. Sound quality in the music technology creations was satisfactory to good, with however just a few getting the full 5 marks.

The few improvisations showed some spontaneity but generally wanted to stay in a formal situation – a jazz standard or a pop chord sequence, with not much risk taking.

Criterion E

Creativity and communication were, as the overall marks would suggest, satisfactory to very good. A few candidates seemed to suffer from a lack of commitment, presenting work that seemed unfinished, and that needed some more care.

This criterion whilst often being a simple confirmation of A and B gave the chance for examiners to award communication and commitment. Higher scores here were portfolios that presented a good variety of work; music that showed a strong desire to communicate and where it was evident that the candidate had given time and energy to the project. Lower scorers were those that seemed routine or even uninterested, sometimes presenting two or three works that were quite similar.

Criterion F

Reflections were more organised in this session, with several candidates opting to give headings: Intention, Process and Outcome to separate paragraphs. These were usually among the higher scorers but these headings were no guarantee of top marks.

Some reflections were extremely poor and were obviously written as an afterthought to the composition. Some were too subjective, giving more personal circumstances than information about the music. There were also some short reflections which lost marks simply because they said so little.

In "intentions" it was quite common not to mention the instrumentation chosen, which one would imagine to be fundamental to the intention.

Processes sometimes talked through the work in the manner of a programme note rather than reflecting on the process: decisions taken, mistakes made and then corrected. It was rare to find candidates who really explained their creative process making technical-musical references to their works.

Outcomes were, as usual, the weaker part of reflections. Many candidates did not confront this element, and many of those who did often limited themselves to saying they were satisfied with the result.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates should be reminded of the benefits of presenting variety in the portfolio. Portfolios with breadth and variety tend to score better than those with two or three similar pieces.

It seems to examiners that some students might have benefited from more encouragement to write outside of their comfort zone, to move out of the same song forms, or classical sonata movements in at least one piece. This would help their growth as music creators and give breadth to their portfolios.

A continued concern is the lack of teacher comments on some portfolios. It is helpful to the examiner to have these comments available, as they tend to illuminate why/how a teacher has assigned marks to a given item. Also in the case of missing or inappropriate material, a teacher's comments can help the examiner to understand what has happened.

Some teacher's comments mentioned "running out of time," "rushing to complete the work before the deadline," "not able to fulfil all of the requirements," so it might be prudent to begin the entire process earlier and to manage time more efficiently.

It should be remembered that if a student wishes to compose a piece in Baroque style, as a composition, the piece still must have full notation including expression. (Stylistic techniques exercises in Baroque style are exempt from this, but not compositions.)

The choice to write for large orchestral resources is not always a good one. Although some students showed a good handling of a full orchestra, in general smaller ensembles are easier to cope with, allowing the composer to focus better his ideas, and avoid having massive empty spaces on the score.

Music composed for a film or a video clip should still stand up. Examiners are not required to assess the suitability of a composition for a film or a play.

Students presenting arrangements should be taught that they are going to create a new musical context for the material. They should always present the original that has been worked from, and try to go further than just transcribing this material to a new instrumentation.

Students presenting stylistic techniques should have a firm grasp of the style as well as the "rules". This can only be achieved by completing exercises and analysing examples.

Paper one (Listening paper) (HL)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-13	14-26	27-37	38-42	43-47	48-52	53-100

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

As noted, the Webern track (Q4) was obviously perceived as the more challenging proposition, though examiners were sensitive to the difficulty of the task, and made allowances for this in marking. Q3 clearly presented difficulties for less prepared candidates too: some seemed hard pressed to find suitable examples and/or strayed into irrelevance, and some even omitted it entirely, even though their responses elsewhere suggested they would have been fully capable of tackling it.

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

Candidates generally seemed to have been well prepared in the prescribed works, particularly the Bach, and those who chose Q1 usually demonstrated at least some grasp of the basic principles of the *concerto grosso* genre – though in some cases this resulted in their spending too much time on this question at the expense of other parts of the paper. Tracks 2 and 3 of Section B also seemed to belong to genres with which candidates were familiar, and several could offer quite deep and well-informed analyses of them.

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

Question 1

Most candidates were well prepared for this question and had some understanding of *concerto grosso* principles and their associated terminology. While the *concertino/ripieno* contrast was however usually understood (albeit with a tendency to dismiss the latter as 'accompaniment'), ritornello form was not always discussed and, where it was, very few students explored its tonal aspects or the final return of the theme. There was also a tendency to consider general Baroque features such as the use of *basso continuo,* and occasional inappropriate use of terminology, with 'ritornello' and 'tutti' often used interchangeably, or the term *'concerto grosso'* itself confused with *'basso continuo'.*

Question 2

Several students invested a considerable amount of time describing the original treatment of the theme here – for which some credit was given, as it is a necessary starting point for exploring its subsequent transformations. Some stronger candidates then went on to correctly locate and contrast its subsequent reappearances, but many seemed to misunderstand what was required of them, and opted – for example – to describe the 'five-part rondo' which the theme introduces, often including irrelevant material about the intervening episodes, or digressions on typical features of Hungarian traditional music.

Question 3

Some candidates had clearly prepared for this question and could make some relevant comparisons, e.g. in terms of phrasing, contour, scales, intervals or the use of thematic fragmentation. Others were obviously more challenged by it, and either strayed into irrelevant matters such as form, texture or rhythm, or interpreted 'melodic character' as meaning 'treatment of themes' – limiting their discussion, and often resulting in the inclusion of irrelevant material about the transformation or instrumentation of thematic ideas.

Question 4

Responses to this extract seemed to reflect candidate's familiarity (or otherwise) with its style and context. One or two exceptional students supplied serial analyses or correctly identified the sonata structure, and it was encouraging to see that almost all candidates approached the task in a positive spirit. However, many responses simply consisted of a narration of events, often repeating information already evident from the score (e.g. identifying the structure with the location of the double bar lines). Several also had difficulty identifying the precise context: some came close with 'atonal' or 'expressionist' (though thus often considering the work 'free' or 'through-composed'), but other interpretations ('minimalist', 'impressionist', 'classical' or even 'baroque') suggested a lack of familiarity with 20th-century styles or the history of Western art music in general.

Question 5

Candidates generally seemed to be familiar with the style, composer and instrumentation of this track, often describing features such as motivic construction, phrasing, harmony and tonality in some detail. Few recognised the extract as a sonata exposition, but those who identified it as 'ternary' based on what they heard were not penalised for doing so. Some however seemed unfamiliar with the composition of a string quartet, often hearing a double bass, and the context was variously identified as 'Classical', 'Romantic' or both: considering Beethoven's historical position, all three of these were accepted.

Question 6

Most candidates clearly felt at home here too, and could describe the general 'jazz' context and some of its typical features using appropriate terminology ('walking bass', 'trading fours'). Attempts to be more specific were not always so accurate, however, with 'big band' a popular suggestion. Many candidates identified the larger structural blocks, with stronger candidates

including details on the phrase lengths of individual sections or the '32-bar song form' of the opening, but surprisingly few paid much attention to what is arguably the key structural event– the appearance of the 'Hold that Tiger' theme – some of them dismissing it as a 'bridge passage' or even ignoring it completely.

Question 7

Many candidates recognised the general Indian (though not specifically Carnatic) context here and applied appropriate technology such as 'raga', 'tala' or 'heterophony' – though others mistook the origin for the Middle East, South America or even northern Europe. There were also some good accounts of the strophic structure, though for others the length of the piece proved challenging, and time management issues seem to have prevented them giving a full account. There was also a tendency in some cases to infer 'Indian' elements in the piece that were not actually present, such as the presence of a sitar or sarangi rather than a violin.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

In Section A, students should be encouraged to 'unpack' the questions carefully before attempting them, ensuring that they fully understand what is required of them. Many marks are lost unnecessarily because candidates have misinterpreted the question (e.g. reading 'melodic character' as 'thematic development') or included irrelevant material, often contextual rather than analytical. The frequent recurrence of similar material often suggests origins in pre-existent sources, and the point needs to be reiterated that higher marks are awarded for convincing, well-illustrated discussions, not simply for memorised 'facts'. The use of reliable secondary sources is not necessarily to be discouraged, but candidates should make their own analyses before consulting the work of others (who may not necessarily concur with one another). Particularly for Q3, which tends to focus on basic musical features such as rhythm or melody, students should cultivate an understanding of musical elements and – in general – the ability to use appropriate terminology ('concertino', 'ripieno', 'ritornello') articulately and accurately.

In Section B, the difficulties in accurately contextualising the Webern extract highlighted the need for familiarising students with the broad history of Western art music styles, as well as key genres in jazz, pop and traditional music. Appropriate terminology should be taught in parallel (very few students used terms such as 'serial' or '12-tone' about the Webern), and skills in aural analysis should be similarly tailored to suit contextual requirements. Once again, moreover, many candidates provided responses wholly or partially in the form of disconnected lists of 'elements' (or even items of terminology) without any locations or context. Candidates should be encouraged to prepare a template for each answer giving the broad overall structure with bar numbers/timings, and to locate musical features precisely within this template in chronological sequence (to prevent examiners having to scroll back and forth through the track to find them!)

Generally, some problems accurately describing the clarinet theme in Q2 again suggested that candidates need to be given guidance on transposing instruments, or those that use the alto/tenor clefs. The frequent identification of the *trombe* in the Kodály as 'trombones' also implied that some familiarisation with instrument names in languages other than English would

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be beneficial. Several candidates' papers also suggested time management problems, with answers to Q7 often noticeably shorter, or some aspects of Section B questions (e.g. structure of the Webern) given disproportionate consideration at the expense of others. The strategy adopted by certain candidates – reversing the order of the sections, thereby reserving the end of the exam for the more familiar set works – may perhaps be worth exploring here. Finally, it needs to be stressed once again that, despite the pressures of the exam, candidates need to strive towards legible handwriting. However strong, diligently prepared or articulately phrased a response is, it is unlikely to score a particularly high mark if the examiner cannot read it.

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

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-9	10-18	19-31	32-35	36-40	41-44	45-80

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

As noted, the Webern track (Q4) was obviously perceived as the more challenging proposition, though examiners were sensitive to the difficulty of the task, and made allowances for this in marking.

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

Candidates generally seemed to have been well prepared in the prescribed works, particularly the Bach, and those who chose Q1 usually demonstrated at least some grasp of the basic principles of the *concerto grosso* genre – though in some cases this resulted in their spending too much time on this question at the expense of other parts of the paper. Tracks 2 and 3 of Section B also seemed to belong to genres with which candidates were familiar, and several could offer quite deep and well-informed analyses of them.

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

Question 1

Most candidates were well prepared for this question and had some understanding of *concerto grosso* principles and their associated terminology. While the *concertino/ripieno* contrast was however usually understood (albeit with a tendency to dismiss the latter as 'accompaniment'), ritornello form was not always discussed and, where it was, very few students explored its tonal aspects or the final return of the theme. There was also a tendency to consider general Baroque features such as the use of *basso continuo,* and occasional inappropriate use of terminology, with 'ritornello' and 'tutti' often used interchangeably, or the term *'concerto grosso'* itself confused with *'basso continuo'.*

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Responses to this extract seemed to reflect candidate's familiarity (or otherwise) with its style and context. One or two exceptional students supplied serial analyses or correctly identified the sonata structure, and it was encouraging to see that almost all candidates approached the task in a positive spirit. However, many responses simply consisted of a narration of events, often repeating information already evident from the score (e.g. identifying the structure with the location of the double bar lines). Several also had difficulty identifying the precise context: some came close with 'atonal' or 'expressionist' (though thus often considering the work 'free' or 'through-composed'), but other interpretations ('minimalist', 'impressionist', 'classical' or even 'baroque') suggested a lack of familiarity with 20th-century styles or the history of Western art music in general.

Question 4

Candidates generally seemed to be familiar with the style, composer and instrumentation of this track, often describing features such as motivic construction, phrasing, harmony and tonality in some detail. Few recognised the extract as a sonata exposition, but those who identified it as 'ternary' based on what they heard were not penalised for doing so. Some however seemed unfamiliar with the composition of a string quartet, often hearing a double bass, and the context was variously identified as 'Classical', 'Romantic' or both: considering Beethoven's historical position, all three of these were accepted.

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Most candidates clearly felt at home here too, and could describe the general 'jazz' context and some of its typical features using appropriate terminology ('walking bass', 'trading fours'). Attempts to be more specific were not always so accurate, however, with 'big band' a popular suggestion. Many candidates identified the larger structural blocks, with stronger candidates including details on the phrase lengths of individual sections or the '32-bar song form' of the opening, but surprisingly few paid much attention to what is arguably the key structural event– the appearance of the 'Hold that Tiger' theme – some of them dismissing it as a 'bridge passage' or even ignoring it completely.

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Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

In Section A, students should be encouraged to 'unpack' the questions carefully before attempting them, ensuring that they fully understand what is required of them. Many marks are lost unnecessarily because candidates have misinterpreted the question (e.g. reading 'melodic character' as 'thematic development') or included irrelevant material, often contextual rather than analytical. The frequent recurrence of similar material often suggests origins in pre-existent sources, and the point needs to be reiterated that higher marks are awarded for convincing, well-illustrated discussions, not simply for memorised 'facts'. The use of **reliable** secondary sources is not necessarily to be discouraged, but candidates should make their own analyses before consulting the work of others (who may not necessarily concur with one another). Students should also cultivate the ability to use appropriate terminology ('concertino', 'ripieno', 'ritornello') articulately and **accurately.**

In Section B, the difficulties in accurately contextualising the Webern extract highlighted the need for familiarising students with the broad history of Western art music styles, as well as key genres in jazz, pop and traditional music. Appropriate terminology should be taught in parallel (very few students used terms such as 'serial' or '12-tone' about the Webern), and skills in aural analysis should be similarly tailored to suit contextual requirements. Once again, moreover, many candidates provided responses wholly or partially in the form of disconnected lists of 'elements' (or even items of terminology) without any locations or context. Candidates should be encouraged to prepare a template for each answer giving the broad overall structure with bar numbers/timings, and to locate musical features precisely within this template in **chronological sequence** (to prevent examiners having to scroll back and forth through the track to find them!)

Generally, some problems accurately describing the clarinet theme in Q2 again suggested that candidates need to be given guidance on transposing instruments, or those that use the alto/tenor clefs. The frequent identification of the *trombe* in the Kodály as 'trombones' also implied that some familiarisation with instrument names in languages other than English would be beneficial. Several candidates' papers also suggested time management problems, with answers to Q6 often noticeably shorter, or some aspects of Section B questions (e.g. structure of the Webern) given disproportionate consideration at the expense of others. The strategy adopted by certain candidates – reversing the order of the sections, thereby reserving the end of the exam for the more familiar set works – may perhaps be worth exploring here. Finally, it needs to be stressed once again that, despite the pressures of the exam, candidates need to strive towards legible handwriting. However strong, diligently prepared or articulately phrased a response is, it is unlikely to score a particularly high mark if the examiner cannot read it.

Musical Links Investigation (HL, SLS, SLG, SLC)

Component grade boundaries

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

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There is an indication that students are exploring a variety of musical cultures and it is pleasing also to see that many world music cultures are being explored. As is normal we were presented with a wide range of work but the majority was a standard of average to higher in this marking season. Format of the task was varied but a great many students presented with magazine articles. Most websites and radio interviews failed to provide the depth needed due to missing musical examples and students engaged more with format than content. Websites also were hard to see as a whole piece in the RM Assessor format and students and teachers need to think about how their format will transfer to this assessment tool, remembering that examiners are not able to access external links.   It is vital that students view the content as the priority and then look to their format and how they can present this task creatively and clearly, including selecting an appropriate font size.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Most candidates chose distinct musical cultures, with only a few exceptions. It is pleasing to see that there appears to be a greater understanding of what the IB considers as 'culture' in this context.   There were a few students who chose pieces that were too long for the investigation (e.g. whole symphonies) and then also on the other end of the spectrum those that were too brief to allow for analysis (monophonic 16 bar folk songs). There were some very creative links which allowed students to really explore the music in depth. We are still seeing some links that are not appropriate such as instrumentation and ones that don't allow depth in analysis such as dynamics. Other links that is coming up often are tonality - comparing pieces that are both in a major key often does not allow for depth in analysis – and improvisation. While the latter can be a good choice of link, often students are only looking at this in general and not really analyzing exactly what the performers are doing.

Teachers and students should make sure the links, pieces and cultures are clearly identified on the 6 MLI cover sheet.

Criterion B

There was a broad span in ability shown in this criterion. While there was overall an attempt to analyse the pieces, there was a tendency for narration and a great deal of contextual

discussion. It is vital that students analyse the pieces in depth and when they highlight a musical link that it is investigated fully and not merely stated. These points then need to be substantiated with evidence that validates them, either by referring to time points in an uploaded track, or bar / measure numbers in printed material. It is preferable that students insert musical examples within the script as examiners need to keep opening another file to see scores if uploaded separately.

Musical examples were poorly presented with many written examples missing clefs/key signatures/time signatures and often examples did not validate the argument presented. Students should also think about how they annotate these examples so that they are being very clear about the point they are making.

Overall, the analysis presented was mostly good but further depth was needed.

Criterion C

Overall, the technical language used was adequate. At times students used terms but did not make their understanding clear with the use of them. The explanation given by the student should really clarify their understanding of the term. Many students chose to put in definition glossaries. While this is fine if they have used a term appropriately within the script this should not be needed. There were many students who used technical terms in a confused manner or did not take the opportunity to use them when they could. Too often technical terms are used and not always applied to show knowledge. It was good to see some students with a clear command of terms.

Criterion D

Referencing was adequately done but there is still a trend to use Wikipedia as the only resource. This should be a starting place and more academic references used. If referencing web addresses, these need to be the full URL with access dates. It is vital that students include primary sources – scores and audio. Referencing within the script needs to be used and especially musical examples and paraphrasing. Referencing another student's MLI is not appropriate – there were a few instances of this in this session. Mostly the layout was done well but students and teachers would be wise to consider how their media piece will be seen in RM Assessor.

Criterion E

There were some scripts that really showed a creativity and depth in thinking but overall the work presented failed to fulfil this criterion very well. Students need to consider their audience and write accordingly. They way arguments are formatted, evidence provided and the language used are all elements considered in this criterion. Students should write a conclusion as this helps them to truncate and summarise their thinking.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Criterion A

It is vital that candidates are guided to choosing correct cultures from the beginning of the process and the idea of a "musical culture" should be in their thoughts long before the introduction of this task. The links chosen need to be ones that allow for depth in the analysis. For example, just choosing homophonic texture is not going to allow for depth in the analysis unless this can then move into chordal use, structure etc. Many students chose Jazz and improvisation as a link. While this is a great idea they must then be able to transcribe and discuss the improvisation in a detailed manner. The cultures and links need to be made clear at the very beginning of the script. Many students chose arrangements of pieces and they need to ensure that if they are after 'traditional' music it is this and not a modern variation of this.

Criterion B

Students should not spend most their word limit on contextual information, they need to get into the analysis very quickly. Students must be able to discuss why they have chosen the links they have clearly. To do this they need to present their points and validate them with musical evidence. Written musical examples are a very good way of doing this but they should be careful to always include clefs etc. and state where they are from. Audio examples are fine but it is recommended that the students prepare the audio and only upload extracts and not whole tracks (there is a 5-minute limit for audio upload). Musical evidence is crucial and students should be studying ways of doing this prior to this task. Teachers should be encouraging their students to ensure that the points they are making are clearly supported with evidence.

Analysis should delve deeper than things like 'the same tonality'. While two pieces may be in the same key this is not significant analysis. Students could then go on to look at intervals used, cadences, harmonic rhythm etc. Analysis needs to be substantial.

To be successful in the criterion students need to make points, discuss in depth and then substantiate them.

Criterion C

They should use technical language always possible and ensure that they have shown an understanding of that term within their explanation.

Criterion D

Students should be encouraged to research widely and not go for the quickest and easiest sites. While Wikipedia may be a good starting point, it should not be relied upon. Teachers should help students ensure they have listed all their primary sources and referenced within the script. Musical examples, pictures and paraphrasing must be referenced within the script.

Criterion E

A well-considered and carefully planned script is what is needed for students to can do well in this task. Students should be given tasks prior to this that encourage them to think independently but also require they consider and discuss analysis of pieces. Teachers should also ensure that students are given adequate time to plan and research this task prior to submission date. This can be a challenging task but students who are guided carefully and

given the encouragement to explore many different options are the ones that find a creativity of thought and intellectual depth.

Further comments

Now that this component is e-marked teachers need to think carefully how students present their work in order to ensure that the transfer of this information and layout is conducive to the effort and quality of the work. Hyperlinks that are put into websites or any other media format will not work in the assessing software. Scanning of documents should be done at a high dpi to ensure that the students work is presented in the best possible manner. It is vital that teachers and students ensure all elements of the submission are uploaded, labelled correctly and put in the correct order. It is recommended that students use the opportunity of the word limit (2000) to ensure they have explained and explored their pieces to the best of their ability. Uploading of entire scores is not needed, if examples are used within the scripts and this is referenced then no score need be uploaded.

This task is an exciting independent project but students need to be prepared and ready to work on it. Preparation tasks in the prior year can help enormously and teachers also need to ensure that students have been exposed to a depth and variety of music to enable them to make an informed choice of cultures and links.