

Coursework Handbook

Cambridge IGCSE™ / IGCSE (9–1)

Music 0410 / 0978

For examination from 2026



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Introduction

This handbook is a guide to the coursework components for Cambridge IGCSE / IGCSE (9-1) Music

- **Component 2 – Performing**
- **Component 3 – Composing**

The purpose of this handbook is to:

- offer advice on the requirements of the coursework components
- provide examples of candidate work.

We recommend you read sections 1 and 2 so that you have a good understanding of the requirements of the coursework components.

Section 3 explains how to mark coursework.

Section 4 provides examples so that you can listen to and assess the performances and compositions that accompany this handbook. Moderator comments have been provided to clarify the levels (high, middle and low) awarded.

1. Syllabus requirements

Component 2 – Performing

Candidates must complete **two** pieces of performing coursework. Each part should last at least two minutes, and the performances together should last no longer than 10 minutes:

Part 1 – solo performing

Candidates must sing or play a solo. If the piece is very short, they may perform a second solo on the same instrument or voice. The solo may be accompanied or unaccompanied, but if the piece is intended to be accompanied, this is how it should be performed. Candidates may offer self-accompanied singing; they can choose to be assessed for their singing alone, or for the singing and accompanying together. Pieces may be accompanied in any of the following ways:

- by any instrument played live (e.g. a piano)
- by any small group of instruments played live (e.g. a rhythm section)
- by a backing track
- by the candidate themselves (e.g. by playing a guitar whilst singing).

Part 2 – performing with others

Candidates must sing or play with other live performers, in a duet or small group. If the piece is very short, they may perform a second piece on the same instrument or voice. They do not need to perform on the same instrument as that offered for solo performing. The piece chosen should allow the candidate to demonstrate rhythmic coordination with the other musicians, and ensemble awareness. Backing tracks may be used, provided there is at least one live performer in addition to the candidate. The candidate's part must not be extensively doubled by any of the other performers. The other musicians do not have to be candidates for the examination. It is not necessary for all candidates in a class to perform in the same ensemble. Teachers may perform as part of a group. Examples of the types of performing which would be suitable are:

- playing a duet for any two instruments where both parts are equally important, with or without accompaniment
- playing either part in a piano duet
- performing a part in a small instrumental ensemble
- singing a duet or in a small vocal ensemble with one voice per part, with or without accompaniment
- singing or playing in a band
- accompanying on any appropriate instrument
- singing or playing with a backing track **and** at least one other live performer.

Component 3 – Composing

Candidates are required to submit **two** original compositions. There must be some difference between the two compositions in the selection of instrument(s), voice(s) or electronic sounds. The following types of composition are not acceptable:

- theme and variations where the candidate has not written the theme
- arrangements of pre-existing pieces.

There are no recommended minimum or maximum timings as this is dependent on the tempo and complexity of the music. To access the highest marks each composition should be long enough to demonstrate the skills being assessed in each criterion.

Composition 1 must be notated using staff notation, in the form of a complete score. A recording (which may be live or made using music technology) must be submitted with the score.

Composition 2 must be written to a candidate-defined brief which relates to one of the following areas of study:

- Music and words
- Music for dance
- Music for small ensemble
- Music for stage and screen

These compositions must be submitted as a recording together with:

- **either** a detailed written commentary with timings, which must follow the template provided
- **or** a statement of how the composition relates to the brief together with a score written in a notation system that is appropriate to the style/tradition of the music:
 - a composition for guzheng could be notated using cipher notation
 - a composition for jazz ensemble could be notated using a lead sheet showing the melody and chord symbols
 - a composition for clarinet could be notated using staff notation.

2. Delivering coursework

Although the components of listening, performing and composing are examined separately, they should be seen as complementary skills and where possible you should make links between the music that the learners listen to, play/sing and compose.

Component 2 – Performing

Solo performing

In most centres, learners receive their instrumental or singing tuition on an individual basis from a specialist teacher, either at the centre or outside. It is a good idea to prepare an information sheet which each learner can give to their instrumental teacher outlining the requirements of the performing component, and highlighting the internal deadlines you are setting for the recording of the performing coursework. If your learners will be developing their instrumental or vocal skills within the classroom setting only, it is essential that this starts at the beginning of the course and is a regular part of the lessons in order to give learners the greatest chance to make good progress.

You should aim to hear your learners perform on their solo instrument regularly – if done in a supportive whole-class setting this can be of great benefit not only to everyone's performing skills, through discussion of aspects of successful performances, but also to listening skills, by asking questions about the style and features of the music each learner is playing.

It is also a good idea to record the learner regularly – playing in front of a microphone can be daunting at first; the more experience learners have of being recorded, the more confident their playing will become. Playing back the recording to the learner can also be a very valuable teaching and learning tool.

Performing with others

Performing with other instrumentalists or singers is one of the most rewarding parts of being a musician and is a core part of the syllabus. There are many sources of ensemble music. For pianists and players of orchestral instruments, the extensive repertoire of chamber music composed from the Baroque period to the present day (piano duets, trio sonatas, flute trios, string quartets, wind quintets etc.) can provide material at every level of difficulty, from simpler classical minuets to movements which will challenge even the most able musicians. There is an enormous range of ensemble vocal music in all styles (although it is important to remember that the learner's part must not be doubled, so small vocal ensembles are more appropriate than a full choir). Drummers and electric or bass guitarists may choose to perform in a small rock or jazz band.

There is a wide range of classroom ensemble material published and in many centres teachers make their own arrangements of pieces to suit both the instruments available and the learners' ability. Some centres choose to organise ensemble performances using just the members of the class; others involve musicians who are not studying for IGCSE / IGCSE (9–1) Music. Either approach is perfectly valid.

It is essential to note that the following types of performing are not acceptable for Part 2:

- An accompanied solo performance in which the candidate plays the solo part. For example, a flute solo with piano accompaniment would not be acceptable if the candidate plays the flute part
- Solo repertoire to which extra parts have been added. For example, a piano solo in a jazz style to which drums and/or bass have been added would not be acceptable if the candidate plays the piano part
- Vocal duets where the vocal parts consist of solo passages alternating between two solo singers – if the candidate hardly ever sings at the same time as the other singer, they cannot demonstrate ensemble skills. Pieces like this are often found in musical theatre repertoire. An appropriate vocal

duet would allow the candidate to demonstrate the ability to maintain an independent part singing in harmony with one or more other singers.

When choosing repertoire for Part 2 with your learners, you should ensure that the piece allows each learner to demonstrate at least the same level of musical and technical skill that they can achieve in their solo performances. Whereas the repertoire for most individual performances is learned by the learner in their individual instrumental lesson, groups pieces are more likely to be rehearsed in school, either in lesson time or as an activity. It is important to allow sufficient time throughout the course for regular rehearsals to develop good ensemble performing skills.

Component 3 – Composing

At the beginning of a composing course, it is important to build up learners' confidence in an area of music that may be new to them. Improvisation activities for the whole class can make a good starting point. For example, learners could listen to some Javanese Gamelan music, then improvise in a group using the notes of the pentatonic scale (e.g. C, D, E, G, A) using different layers of low, medium and high-pitched instruments and short ostinato patterns of their own invention. Classroom tuned percussion instruments (xylophones and metallophones, with the Fs and Bs removed) can make a practical imitation of the Gamelan for these purposes. The great advantage of the pentatonic scale is that everything will sound acceptable, without any jarring dissonances. In this way, learners will quickly find that they are able to create effective music and will start to believe that composing is an activity at which they can succeed.

At some point, ideally at a fairly early point in the course, a transition must be made from group activities to individual composing. This can be very challenging for some students, so it may be helpful to use the familiar language of the pentatonic scale at this stage as well. Learners could be asked to compose a short individual piece, perhaps for piano or for two melodic instruments, using the same principles as those outlined above for improvised music. Then they might be encouraged to compose simple, short melodies using the full major scale. At this point they should be encouraged to write down their ideas, using staff notation; here they will invariably need a lot of help, especially over the notation of rhythm, which is much more complex than pitch.

Learners should also be shown how to fit chords to their melodies, using a simple vocabulary of primary triads (I, IV and V) at first. Instruction in the formation of successful cadences could be introduced at the same time. Although formal harmony exercises do not form part of the assessment, it is good practice to provide tuition in the principles of handling chords and cadences.

More able learners would benefit from an understanding of the techniques of modulation, both moving away from the tonic and (often much more difficult) moving back again. This should always be done in relation to carefully chosen examples from 'real' repertoire, which might be from recordings, but might also be from pieces the learners are performing. This can provide useful opportunities to point out links between the different parts of the syllabus, as well as reinforcing specific teaching points.

The concept of contrast within a composition is another important matter that could be introduced with reference to similar repertoire examples. There are many ways of providing contrast. It might be achieved through changes of texture, or of instrumentation, or of key. It might come from the introduction of contrasting material (but not so dramatically contrasting that it sounds as if it does not belong). Different composers find different solutions, but most successful pieces contain contrasting elements of some kind.

From here it is a relatively short step to a consideration of structure and form. There are very few examples of pieces which have only a single section of music; most have at least two and they are often defined by some kind of contrast between them. Not all sections need to be entirely different: most extended movements involve the repetition of one or more sections. In a rondo, for example, the main theme recurs at various points, its reappearances separated by episodes of contrasting material. Repetitions are often not exactly the same: with computer software it is very easy to 'cut and paste' whole sections, but this can often be too easy a solution especially for more able learners, resulting in

a structure that is rather too predictable and therefore less interesting than it might be. It is good practice to encourage learners to see if they can find slightly different ways of presenting the material when it is repeated: here again, there are many different ways in which this might be achieved.

Composing is full of challenges for both teachers and learners, but in its simplest terms it can be summarised in the following way:

- At any point in composing a piece of music, a composer has to decide what to do next. There are only three options. The composer can:
 - say it again (i.e. repeat exactly)
 - say it again differently (i.e. compose a varied repeat)
 - say something new (i.e. introduce new and contrasting material).

The art of composing consists of learning how to make the right choice, at the right moment, from these three options. What is 'right' in any given circumstances is always a matter of judgement.

Various approaches may be suitable for composing at this level. The following list is by no means exhaustive, but may provide some useful starting points:

- ternary form pieces (three sections, ABA)
- rondo form pieces (often ABACA, i.e. an extension of the ternary principle)
- arch form pieces (often ABACABA, i.e. an adaptation of the Rondo principle)
- dances – e.g. Minuet, Waltz, Tango
- song writing – either with pre-existing lyrics, or the candidate's own words
- theme and variations, provided the learner writes their own theme
- a solo for the learner's own instrument, with piano accompaniment if this is a melody instrument.

In general, it is very difficult for learners at this stage in their musical development to handle experimental forms of composition successfully. Compositions based on Tone Rows, for example, are usually too formulaic; pieces in Minimalist style usually do little more than layer a series of ostinatos without exploring other more significant minimalist techniques; pieces for unpitched instruments alone do not usually succeed in terms of contrast or structure.

Learners should always be encouraged to hear what their music sounds like. Periodic 'workshop' lessons where they perform their pieces to the whole class are recommended as another example of good practice (for these purposes it does not matter if the pieces are incomplete). Music technology provides wonderful opportunities for learners to hear their pieces, but they must always be taught to think carefully about writing idiomatically for real, acoustic instruments, if this is the intention of the composition. A computer programme can play anything it is told to, even a bass C on an oboe sound, a high C on a tuba sound, or a four-note chord for a solo flute but these notes or chords are not available in the real world. Understanding the capabilities of instruments forms a significant part of the assessment for acoustically conceived pieces, so these issues must not be neglected.

Teachers should aim to provide regular feedback throughout the composing process for each piece. When offering advice, teachers should not tell learners how they think the compositions should sound. Instead, they should suggest a variety of ways in which a piece could be improved, so that the learners can then explore on their own and make their own decisions. It is often appropriate to suggest that learners might listen to features of other pieces which may provide a model for their own work. Candidates should generally be expected to work on their own melodic and harmonic ideas but may need guidance in matters such as textural variety, structure, instrumental technique or correct notation. Teachers should monitor the candidates' work frequently; this not only allows them to give regular guidance but is also essential for providing the necessary evidence that allows them to authenticate the submitted coursework as being the candidate's own work.

3. Marking coursework

Component 2 – Performing

Performances must be marked individually (Part 1 – solo performing and Part 2 – performing with others), to reach a total mark of 25 for each.

Bearing in mind the considerations given above, a mark out of 5 is awarded under each heading, using the descriptors as a guide. Do not use half marks; each mark must be a whole number.

If a candidate has performed two short pieces in either part, the pieces should be considered holistically to arrive at a single mark for each criterion.

Marking criteria

The total for Component 2 is 50 marks. Each performance is marked out of 25, with a maximum of 5 marks being awarded for each of the five criteria listed in the syllabus.

- (a) Confidence, fluency and accuracy
- (b) Choice and control of tempo, coordination with the backing track or accompaniment (if applicable) and rhythmic coordination (when performing with others)
- (c) Character, style and ensemble awareness
- (d) Technical control of the instrument
- (e) The performance as a whole

Component 3 – Composing

Compositions must be marked individually, to reach a total mark out of 25 for each of the two pieces.

Bearing in mind the considerations given above, a mark out of 5 is awarded under each heading, using the descriptors as a guide. Do not use half-marks; each mark must be a whole number.

The written commentary should state how the composition fulfils the chosen brief and a description of the music which should be as informative as possible, to allow the recording to be understood in the absence of a score. Teachers should credit work that displays evidence of a careful consideration of the structure and content of the piece; the assessment should take into account the relevance and detail with which the candidate has completed the commentary.

When awarding marks, teachers should consider each aspect of the composition and then make a judgement about which level statement is the 'best fit'. In practice, compositions do not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements. Any such decision should be explained in the comments section on the working mark sheet.

Marking criteria

The total for this Component 3 is 50 marks. Each composition is marked out of 25, with a maximum of 5 marks being awarded for each of the five criteria listed in the syllabus.

- (a) Ideas
- (b) Structure
- (c) Use of medium
- (d) Compositional technique
- (e) **Either**
 - (i) Score presentation / notation

Or

- (ii) Written commentary based on the given template

4. Example performances

There are six example performances (three of solo performing and three of performing with others), representing high, middle and low levels of achievement in performing on a variety of instruments. A commentary, the sheet music and recordings are also provided.

1. Solo performing (Track 1)

Violin (Tchaikovsky: *Canzonetta* from Violin Concerto)

CANZONETTA.

Andante. $\text{♩} = 84.$

The sheet music for 'CANZONETTA' is presented in a single system with 11 staves. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a quarter note equal to 84 beats per minute. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major). The piece begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a trill (*tr*) in the first measure. Subsequent measures feature a variety of dynamics including *p*, *f*, *cresc.*, *dim.*, and *f con anima*. Performance instructions such as *con sordino* and *espress.* are also present. The score includes trills (*tr*) and a trill with a fermata (*tr* *tr*). The piece concludes with a *dim.* dynamic and a *attacca subito.* instruction. The total number of measures is 22.

Moderator comments

The performance is confident and fluent, and the pitch is entirely accurate; whilst the time taken over the turns at the end of the first couple of trills is a little excessive, this is not a significant concern in a performance at this level.

The tempo is well chosen and appropriate to the music with some rubato as would be expected in this style. The performance is very expressive; the phrasing is particularly well controlled, and whilst some of the playing is arguably a little strong at times there is still plenty of attention to dynamic contrast and articulation.

The candidate has demonstrated very good technical control, with impressive intonation, tone quality, bow control and vibrato. This music makes substantial interpretative and technical demands, and the candidate fully meets these challenges, giving a performance which is fully engaging.

Overall, it represents an example of a very high level of achievement.

2. Solo performing (Track 2)

Erhu (Huang Haihuai: *Horse racing*)

HORSE RACING

HUANG HAIHUAI

♩ = 136

Erhu

Piano

f

f

mf

mf

p

p

26 [29]

ff p

36

mf f

45

mp

54 [61]

f

63



72

77 *pizz.* *mf* *pp*



80



89

93 *arco* *f*



The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece, spanning measures 98 to 115. Each system consists of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).
- The first system (measures 98-106) features a treble staff with eighth-note patterns and a bass staff with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte) in measures 100 and 102.
- The second system (measures 107-114) shows a treble staff with more complex rhythmic figures and a bass staff with chords and eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo) in measures 110 and 112.
- The third system (measures 115) concludes the piece with a treble staff featuring sixteenth-note runs and a bass staff with sustained chords. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Moderator comments

The performance is very well prepared and played fluently and accurately.

The tempo is slightly slow, and the racing character of the music might have been more effective if played slightly faster, but it was nonetheless well maintained throughout the different sections of the piece. The performance was expressive with some dynamic contrast, although the forte sections could have been projected more.

Most technical aspects of the performance were well controlled, although intonation was sometimes not entirely focused. This music makes substantial interpretative and technical demands, and it was performed confidently.

Overall, it represents a high level of achievement.

3. Performing with others (Track 3)

Guzheng (Cui Janghui: *Bai Suzhen at the foot of Qincheng Mountain*)

青城山下白素贞

微信公众号：崔江卉古筝

古筝竹笛合奏谱

 $1 = C \frac{2}{4}$

小G调梆笛筒音作2

作曲：左宏元

改编：崔江卉

制谱：王孟秋

崔江卉

古筝定弦：2 4 5 6 1 2 3 5 6 1 2 3 5 6 1 2 3 5 6 1 2

音名：D F G A C D E G A C D E G A C D E G A C D

注：红色表示需要在传统C调上做出调整变化的音

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古筝

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410 410 | 410 410 | 260 260 | 310 310 | 410 410 | 520 520

笛子

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古筝

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150 150 | 150 150 | 410 410 | 410 410 | 150 150 | 150 150

笛子

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古筝

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古筝

渐慢 自由地

Moderator comments

The candidate plays the guzheng, accompanying a dizi.

The performance is badly affected by the instrument being out of tune with itself, and also with the dizi. Nonetheless, it is important to mark according to the assessment criteria, recognising the strengths of the performance as well as the weaknesses.

The performance is basically accurate, and the tempo is well chosen. The guzheng provides a relatively secure rhythmic foundation for the dizi player and at times the ensemble co-ordination between them is quite good. However, the performance is rather lacking in sensitivity, and there is much more room for dynamic contrast.

The music contains a variety of interpretative and technical demands, and overall, the performance represents a middle level of achievement.

4. Performing with others (Track 4)

Piano (Bigaglia: *Minuetto* from Sonata in A minor)

Tempo di Minuetto

The musical score is for a Minuetto in A minor, 3/4 time. It consists of 32 measures. The piano part is written for a single performer. The score includes various musical notations such as trills, slurs, and fingerings. The tempo is marked 'Tempo di Minuetto'. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system covers measures 1-8, the second system covers measures 9-16, the third system covers measures 17-24, the fourth system covers measures 25-32. The score includes various musical notations such as trills, slurs, and fingerings.

Moderator comments

The candidate is the piano accompanist in this performance.

The pitch and rhythm are moderately accurate but there are rather a lot of wrong notes and also some hesitation. The candidate provides reasonable support for the soloist but it is not a particularly fluent accompaniment, and there is a sense that the soloist is waiting for the accompanist at times.

The piano part is not played with a strong sense of musical line, and expression and articulation have largely been ignored meaning the performance has little character.

Overall, the performance is reasonably successful, and it demonstrates a middle level of achievement.

5. Performing with others (Track 5)

Morin khuur Part 1 (Jantsannorow: *Mongolia Melody*)

Mongolia melody

N.Jantsannorow

Performing by: Bat-Ireedui Ankhbayar

MN013

0002

$\text{♩} = 80$

m.khuur 1

m.khuur 2

4

7

10

12

15



18



21



24



27



30



The image displays six systems of musical notation, each consisting of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The systems are numbered 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, and 30. Systems 15, 18, 21, and 24 feature a continuous eighth-note accompaniment in the bass staff. Systems 15, 18, and 21 have a melody in the treble staff, while systems 24 and 27 have a melody in the bass staff. System 30 features a melody in the treble staff. The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs.



Moderator comments

The performance is moderately accurate but given its relative simplicity it is not especially precise.

The tempo is well-chosen and the rhythmic co-ordination with the second player is relatively strong. However, there is an absence of dynamic contrast throughout the performance and the melodic section is not played with any real sense of expression. On the positive side, the balance between the two players is quite good.

There are some technical issues with the performance; intonation and tone quality are quite weak at times, and the bow control is not secure. This is a rather simple piece, which has been extended with an unwritten repeat to increase the performing time.

In addition to the melodic line, the candidate plays an accompanying passage in the second part of the piece, but neither passage is challenging in technique, and it is an example of music which makes simple demands.

Overall, it represents a relatively low level of achievement.

6. Solo performing (Track 6)

Electronic keyboard (Horner: Theme from *Titanic*)

TITANIC

Celine Dion

$\text{♩} = 100 \text{ BPM}$

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. It begins with a tempo marking of 100 BPM. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into seven staves of music. The first staff starts at bar 5 and ends at bar 8. The second staff starts at bar 9 and ends at bar 12. The third staff starts at bar 13 and ends at bar 16. The fourth staff starts at bar 17 and ends at bar 20. The fifth staff starts at bar 21 and ends at bar 24. The sixth staff starts at bar 25 and ends at bar 28. The seventh staff starts at bar 29 and ends at bar 32. Chords are indicated above the notes: Am, G, F, G, Am, G, C, G, F, C, G, C, G, F, C, G, C, G, F, Em, Am, G, F, G, Am, G, F, Em, Dm, Am, G, F, G, Am, G, F, G, C.

Moderator comments

The pitch is generally correct, but the rhythm is very inaccurate and hesitant throughout the performance.

In the introduction, there is no sense of a consistent tempo. However, when the main melody starts in bar 9 the sense of pulse is somewhat better although there are still some fluctuations, particularly towards the end. There is little account taken of phrasing and expression in this performance.

The performance consists of single notes in one hand only, with slow-moving auto chords. The candidate is only able to display a very narrow range of skills through this simple music which uses an easy range of notes, has simple rhythms and offers minimal scope for interpretation.

Overall, it represents a low level of achievement.

5. Example compositions

There are three example compositions, representing high, middle and low levels of achievement in composing. A commentary is provided for each.

Example composition 1

Tango (Track 1)

TANGO

Appassionato ♩ = 120

Piano *ff*

6 **A** *mf* *sim...*

11 *f* *mf* *sim...*

15 *f* *mf* *sim...*

19 *f*

23 **B**

Pno.

27

Pno.

30

Pno.

34

Pno.

39 **C**

Pno.

44

Pno.

mp

mf

f

mf

sim....

48 **D** *giocososo*

Pno. *mp*

53

Pno.

58 *p*

Pno.

63 **E** *8va* *mf*

Pno.

67 (8) 3

Pno.

72 (8) *p* 3

Pno.

76 (80)

Pno.

81 (80) **F**

Pno. *f* *mf*

86

Pno.

90 *sim...* *f* *mf* 3 3

Pno.

94 *sim...*

Pno.

97 *ff* **A**

Pno.

Moderator comments

The characteristics of the Tango style are very well observed and confidently applied, in particular the distinctive left-hand rhythm. Especially good is the logical way in which the melodic ideas grow out of each other, which gives the piece a strong sense of unity. The piece is structured in rondo form (ABACA). Bars 1–7 form an introduction; 8–23 make up the main theme; bars 24–41 are the first episode; 42–49 repeat the main theme; 50–83 are the second episode; 84–99 repeat the main theme. The form is therefore clear and lucid. Contrasts are made through variation of melody, texture and key and maintain a strong sense of continuity.

The composition is written for the piano (although the piece might also lend itself to being scored for an instrumental ensemble of some kind). The piano writing is entirely practical and care has been taken to exploit a wide range of pitch (e.g. bars 15, 39 in the bass and bars 43, 66 in the treble). Some of the changes of pitch are quite abrupt, in keeping with the style of a Tango.

The introduction uses consecutive chords: in text-book harmony these are considered undesirable, but here they fit in well with the style of the dance. There is a phrase extension in bar 4, making the whole introduction a 7-bar phrase: again, this is unconventional but effective. The consecutive harmony of the introduction comes back in the first Episode; although it is perhaps slightly less effective here, it serves to link the introduction to the rest of the piece. This episode touches on F minor (without really modulating), then goes into G (with a clear, if somewhat unsophisticated, modulation).

The return of the main theme at bar 42 is slightly varied (RH octaves in bars 43, 45). Episode 2 at bar 50 is in the relative major; its apparently new melody is derived from bar 9 of the main theme. The little chromatic link in bar 57 is also important, since this gives rise to the other apparently new theme at bar 66: this way of making one theme grow out of another is a particular strength of the technique demonstrated here.

The score is entirely accurate, carefully edited, and well-laid out with detailed but helpful and sensible performance directions.

Overall, this piece represents an example of a very high level of achievement.

Example composition 2

Untitled (Track 2)

Moderato

Drum Set

Piano

Acoustic Guitar

4-string Bass Guitar

Moderato

Violin 1

5

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

A musical score for a track titled 'Untitled (Track 2)'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system is marked 'Moderato' and includes staves for Drum Set, Piano, Acoustic Guitar, 4-string Bass Guitar, and Violin 1. The Piano part features a complex melody with many beamed sixteenth notes. The Violin 1 part has a simple melody of half notes. The second system starts at measure 5 and includes staves for Dr. (Drum Set), Pno. (Piano), A. Gtr. (Acoustic Guitar), Bass (4-string Bass Guitar), and Vln. 1 (Violin 1). The Piano and Violin 1 parts continue their respective melodies, while the other instruments have rests.

10

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

15

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 10 to 14, and the second system covers measures 15 to 19. The instruments are Drums (Dr.), Piano (Pno.), Acoustic Guitar (A. Gtr.), Bass, and Violin 1 (Vln. 1). In measures 10-14, the drums play a consistent pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The acoustic guitar and violin 1 are mostly silent in this section. In measures 15-19, the piano accompaniment changes, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a bass line. The bass instrument becomes more active, playing a series of eighth notes. The acoustic guitar and violin 1 remain silent throughout the entire section.

20

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

Drums: A complex rhythmic pattern consisting of many sixteenth notes, with some rests. The pattern is consistent across measures 20-24.

Piano: Chords and some melodic lines. In measure 20, there are chords in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 21, there are chords in both hands. In measure 22, there is a chord in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 23, there is a chord in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 24, there is a chord in the right hand and a single note in the left hand.

Acoustic Guitar: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In measure 20, there are eighth notes in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 21, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 22, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 23, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 24, there are eighth notes in both hands.

Bass: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In measure 20, there are eighth notes in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 21, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 22, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 23, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 24, there are eighth notes in both hands.

Violin 1: A single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 20, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 21, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 22, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 23, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 24, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand.

25

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

Drums: A complex rhythmic pattern consisting of many sixteenth notes, with some rests. The pattern is consistent across measures 25-29.

Piano: Chords and some melodic lines. In measure 25, there are chords in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 26, there are chords in both hands. In measure 27, there are chords in both hands. In measure 28, there are chords in both hands. In measure 29, there are chords in both hands.

Acoustic Guitar: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In measure 25, there are eighth notes in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 26, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 27, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 28, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 29, there are eighth notes in both hands.

Bass: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In measure 25, there are eighth notes in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 26, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 27, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 28, there are eighth notes in both hands. In measure 29, there are eighth notes in both hands.

Violin 1: A single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 25, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 26, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 27, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 28, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. In measure 29, there is a single note in the right hand and a single note in the left hand.

30

Dr. 

Pno. 

A. Gtr. 

Bass 

Vln. 1 

35

Dr. 

Pno. 

A. Gtr. 

Bass 

Vln. 1 

40

Dr. 

Pno. 

A. Gtr. 

Bass 

Vln. 1 

45

Dr. 

Pno. 

A. Gtr. 

Bass 

Vln. 1 

50

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

This musical system covers measures 50 to 54. The Drums staff is mostly empty, with a few small marks. The Piano part is the most active, featuring a complex melodic line in the right hand with many beamed sixteenth notes, and a simpler bass line in the left hand. The Acoustic Guitar and Bass staves are empty. The Violin 1 staff has a simple melody with a few notes and rests.

55

Dr.

Pno.

A. Gtr.

Bass

Vln. 1

This musical system covers measures 55 to 59. The Drums staff is mostly empty, with a few small marks. The Piano part is the most active, featuring a complex melodic line in the right hand with many beamed sixteenth notes, and a simpler bass line in the left hand. The Acoustic Guitar and Bass staves are empty. The Violin 1 staff has a simple melody with a few notes and rests.

Moderator comments

The themes in this piece are all triadic in nature with occasional stepwise movement linking the notes that belong to the triads. As a result, there is little contrast between them other than some small differences of texture. Everything remains firmly in the tonic key of C major, which reduces the effectiveness of what little contrast there is. The quality of invention is entirely consistent throughout the piece, but this is perhaps a disadvantage here: as a whole, the piece is not as interesting as it might have been. Nevertheless, everything does fit together quite well. Structurally, there are clear sections, some of which are repeated.

The first section (A) consists of bars 1–12 (with a repeat of 9–12); the second section (B) is bars 13–24; there is a brief return of A (bars 25–28), then of B (bars 29–32). A new section (C) is bars 33–44. A returns (bars 45–52) and finally there is a coda based on B (bars 53–61) but transposed up a fourth. This is a kind of ternary structure although its proportions are rather lop-sided. The instrumental parts are all playable but little attention is paid to what is idiomatic for each different instrument.

The acoustic guitar is under-used (it plays in only 8 bars of the piece) and the violin simply underpins the harmony rather than playing a genuinely melodic part. When the drum set plays, it repeats the same two-bar pattern relentlessly. Harmonically, the opening chord progression (I, III, VI, IV) is not entirely conventional but suits the style of the piece quite well.

The use of consecutive fifths is also in keeping with the style, although it could be said that they contribute to the lack of variety in the piece as a whole.

The score looks quite tidy, but the arrangement of the instruments is very nearly upside-down: the violin ought to be at the top and the piano at the bottom. There is an appropriate tempo indication (but this should appear only at the top of the score: above the violin part it is redundant). There are no dynamic markings (other than three hairpins in bars 9, 10 and 11). The slurs in bars 14/15, 18/19, 22/23 and 30/31 are meaningless but they suggest that cut-and-paste has perhaps been over-used. There are a few bowing marks in the violin part.

Overall, this piece represents an example of a middle level of achievement.

Example composition 3

Rocking Chair (Track 3)

Rocking Chair

120 bpm

Flute

Violin

Piano

mf

Fl.

mf

Vln.

pp

Pno.

mp

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Rocking Chair' at 120 bpm. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes staves for Flute, Violin, and Piano. The Flute part begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The Violin part also starts with a treble clef, one flat, and 4/4 time. The Piano part is written for grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat and 4/4 time. The second system includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Violin (Vln.), and Piano (Pno.). The Flute part continues with a treble clef, one flat, and 4/4 time. The Violin part continues with a treble clef, one flat, and 4/4 time. The Piano part continues with a grand staff, one flat, and 4/4 time. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the Flute and Piano in the first system, and *mf* for the Flute, *pp* (pianissimo) for the Violin, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) for the Piano in the second system.

Rocking Chair

The musical score for 'Rocking Chair' is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Violin (Vln.), and Piano (Pno.). The Flute part begins with a half note followed by a series of eighth notes, marked *ff*. The Violin part starts with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes, marked *mp*. The Piano part is mostly silent, with a final chord marked *ff*. The second system continues the themes, with the Flute part marked *fff* and the Violin part marked *mf*. The Piano part continues with a series of eighth notes and a final chord.

Moderator comments

This short piece has very simple ideas which are awkwardly handled. Neither the flute nor the violin play consistent melodies, although there are some isolated bars of melodic writing in both parts. The piece contains only a single section; this would be true even if the repeat were observed (which it is not on the recording). There are, however, some elements of development which give the piece a certain coherence. Bars 6–8, for example, are derived from the shape of the flute part in bar 5 (a rising sixth followed by a descending step). The rising fifth in bar 15 (violin) is imitated in bars 16/17, while the rising sixth in bar 13 (flute) refers back to bar 5, as does the movement from E to D in bars 14/15. The problem with pieces in a single section is that there is little scope for demonstrating aspects of contrast and continuity.

The writing for all three instruments is not particularly idiomatic. The flute part lies mainly in a low register; some impossible chords appear in bars 6 and 20. Some of the double-stops in the violin part are disproportionately difficult, if not all impossible and although the piano part is feasible it is rather awkward. The harmony is generally not very successful. Cadence formation is especially weak and the use of second inversion chords in bars 4, 6 and 12 is very crude.

At some points it is difficult to tell which chords were intended: the candidate's grasp of basic harmonic principles is very insecure. The score is neat and clear. There are dynamic markings and sometimes (e.g. in bar 7) these indicate that consideration has been given to the balance between the instruments.

Overall, this piece represents an example of a low level of achievement.

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