

Music Performance: Solo GA 3: Aural and written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The format of the paper was different from that of previous years and comprised a total of 100 marks. There were a total of nine questions with no optional questions.

Overall, the standard of the results were similar to those for the analogous examination of previous years. Most students negotiated the various tasks with a degree of skill and possessed a reasonable understanding of the necessary procedures for answering each question. Less successful students continued to experience the same difficulties as in previous years. The issues for particular attention are that students should:

- establish a clear understanding of the meaning of ‘diatonic’ and the highly significant (especially key-related) implications of the term, particularly with regard to chord progressions and melodic ‘probabilities’
- attain a reasonable standard of notational skills regarding both pitch and rhythm
- learn to recognise clearly the four cadence types prescribed for study
- learn to identify intervals within melodic contexts
- develop their transcription skills in melodic, harmonic and rhythmic applications
- become aware of exactly what each question type requires, the possible correct field of response and the applicable terminology.

Prose answers were sometimes hard to decipher because students wrote illegibly. There were a number of highly insightful prose responses for Questions 7 to 9 that demonstrated significant understanding of the set works and issues related to performance style and interpretations in performance.

Many students would have benefited from a clearer understanding of the different requirements when discussing, describing, and identifying. For example, discuss does not mean identify or list. The marks available for each of these response types should provide an indication of the level of depth/breadth necessary.

Some students who chose to discuss issues of ‘texture’ seemed to be unclear about any of the meanings of the term in musical contexts. Some students confused ‘rhythm’ with ‘tempo’ and/or ‘texture’ with ‘timbre’. It was evident that some students could not differentiate between instrumentation, harmony, rhythm, texture and/or phrasing and articulation with respect to performance style considerations.

A number of students made inappropriate value judgments regarding the calibre of performance/performers with respect to the set works that they had studied. Although one question asked students to write about the extent to which there were differences between the two ‘interpretations in performance’ studied, an examination setting is not the forum for making denigrating comments about performance standards and/or production quality.

Of concern were the students who wrote about an ensemble work that was not one of the five set works, seemingly unaware that all of the questions in Section B were focused exclusively upon the prescribed ensemble work they had studied.

Some students did not utilise the 15 minutes of reading time prior to the commencement of the CD to their best advantage, especially regarding the questions in Section B.

Some of the prose-based responses lacked organisation, cohesion and an awareness of what the given question requested/required.

Given that question/s may focus upon description and discussion of ‘interpretations in performance’, it is critical that students are exposed to at least two versions of their chosen set work.

Section A – Aural comprehension

Part 1 – Intervals and melody

Question 1 – Recognition of intervals

a. Identification of interval distance (quality and number)

1. Minor 3rd 2. Tritone (°5 / +4) 3. Major 2nd 4. Perfect 4th 5. Minor 6th

Many students could not correctly identify more than two of the intervals, with the greatest number managing to identify only one of them. Many students labelled interval 2 (the tritone) as a ‘Perfect 4th or 5th’. Most students could identify the ‘minor 3rd’, (interval 1) but very few correctly identified the ‘minor 6th’, (interval 5). Some students wrote only the number, not the quality of the interval while others wrote only the quality. Many students are writing ‘M’s that appear to be deliberately ambiguous. As in previous years, it is advised that ‘M’ or ‘m’ **not** be used when

identifying the interval's quality instead; students should write 'Major'/'Maj'/'Ma' or 'Minor'/'Min'/'Mi'. A significant number of students attained no marks for this question, many having made no attempt to answer it.

b. Tonality of the excerpt

MELODIC MINOR

Nearly all students who circled one of the tonalities could identify that the melody was from a minor scale. However, a large number of students did not answer the question (i.e. circled nothing). Questions 1a and 1b were a fair indicator of the student's standard for the remainder of Section A.

Question 2 – Melodic Transcription



Most students transcribed this melody very well, especially those who performed well for Question 1. However, a significant number of students who experienced considerable difficulty with Question 1 transcribed this melody very well, perhaps indicating weaknesses when identifying isolated intervals within melodic contexts. Even the less successful students managed to score good marks for the question, probably because the melody was in a major key and very straightforward. Almost all students could notate most of the rhythm correctly and fairly accurately indicate the melodic contour. Some students would clearly benefit from learning to memorise the tune and then break up the difficult sections into more manageable units. Once memorised it becomes possible to sing the notes of the leaps in order to check their intervals as well as their relationship to the tonic. Some students did not conclude their transcription on the note of the lower tonic ('D').

Consistent errors included:

Bar 1 – Most students transcribed this bar successfully, although some did not hear that all of it moved by step.

Bar 2 – A few students had difficulties with the 3rd ('G' to 'B'). Most recognised that the minim on beat three (the 'A') was an octave higher than the note of the bass.

Bar 3 – Many had difficulties with the 3^{rds} on beats 1, 2 and 3 and the 4th between the 'A' and the 'D' (the second half of 3 to beat 4). Some students had difficulty hearing the IV to I arpeggios in this bar.

Bar 4 – Many students correctly heard the 'ti-do' at the end, but some tried to force the melody into C major (despite the key signature). A significant number of students ended with 's-f-m-r-d' (*usually* finishing on D), rather than 'l-f-r-t-d'. Some students had up to six beats in this bar, despite the clear number of beats in the lower part.

Part 2 – Chords and harmony

Question 3 – Recognition of chord types

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Minor | 2. Dominant 7 | 3. Half diminished (m7/b5 or ø) |
| 4. Augmented | 5. Major 7 | 6. Minor 7 |

This question was answered well by most students. Many students had difficulty identifying the 'half diminished' chord (3) and/or the 'augmented' chord (4). The 'major 7' and 'minor 7' sonorities were also vexatious for some. Only a small percentage of students attained full marks for the question; perhaps surprising given that the presentational format now includes an arpeggio. In addition, some students identified chords that are not examinable (despite all examinable chords being listed on the paper).

Question 4 – Recognition of chord progressions

1. E minor 2. A minor – 2nd inv 3. F# diminished – 1st inv 4. B (dominant) 7 5. C (Major)
or

1. E minor 2. A (-) minor / E 3. F#° (dim) / A 4. B (dom) 7 5. C (Major)
or

1. E minor 2. iv $\frac{6}{4}$ 3. ii° $\frac{6}{3}$ 4. V 7 5. VI
or

1. E minor 2. iv _c 3. ii° _b 4. V 7 5. VI
or

1. E minor 2. IV min $\frac{6}{4}$ 3. II dim (II°) $\frac{6}{3}$ 4. V 7 5. VI
or

1. E minor 2. IV min _c 3. II dim (II°) _b 4. V 7 5. VI
OR

Harmonic Grid	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Bass Note	E	E	A	B	C
Character/Quality/Type	minor	minor	diminished	Dominant 7	Major
Complete name of chord indicating position/inversion	E minor (Root)	A min / E <i>or</i> A minor – 2 nd inversion	F#° / A <i>or</i> F# dim – 1 st inversion	B 7 (Root)	C Major (Root)

Cadence: *Interrupted* (V – VI)

This question was quite well answered. Many students used the grid, thus enabling marks to be awarded for working out the various components of the progression. Identification of the bass line was handled well and many students correctly identified the interrupted cadence.

The following were the consistent problems:

- inappropriate or confused musical grammar – in particular, many students labelled the V (dom) 7 ('B 7') chord as 'V major 7' ('B maj 7').
- the frequent identification of non-diatonic chords. For example, 'D Major' is not diatonic to the harmonic minor form of *E minor* (it is the VII chord of *E Dorian* and *E Aeolian*, neither of which are examinable minor forms, nor are chords built on the 7th degree of any scale).
- the diatonic chord qualities were confused by many.
- correct identification of the last two chords (V7 [or V] to VI) but incorrectly naming the cadence – and vice versa (or correct cadence but no bass notes *or* chords). Some students correctly identified the bass notes but not the chord qualities or the cadence, while a few named the bass notes (in the harmonic grid) and the cadence but not the qualities of the chords (nor their complete names). When using the harmonic grid, it is prudent for students to complete all of the boxes so that nothing of importance is potentially overlooked.
- correct identification of chord 3 (the 'A diminished – 2nd inversion' chord). Many students labelled the chord as a form of 'F' (not 'F#'). Many others had an 'F' in the bass. Some labelled it as 'II – 2nd inversion', indicating 'Major' as the quality of the chord. This was despite the fact that the example box was in a minor key and included examples of an array of notations for the supertonic sonority in the harmonic minor (see above for the list of notations for chord 3 as well as the examination paper itself).
- many students did not identify the cadence.
- some students used Arabic numbers for both position and inversion; for example, '4 – 1', presumably indicating the subdominant (iv) chord in 1st inversion. Although there are some very rare examples of this style of nomenclature, students should use 'standard' figured notation (featuring Roman numbers for the diatonic position of the chord) when writing their answers. If this is a problem, such students are advised to use the harmonic grid exclusively.

- some students intermingled letters of the alphabet and Roman numbers and/or figured notation with AMEB-style inversion notation (e.g. the intermingling of chords classified as ‘ $\frac{6}{3}$ ’ or ‘ $\frac{6}{4}$ ’ with chords in ‘b’ or ‘c’ position within the same response). Students should not mix and match styles of harmonic nomenclature.

A surprising number of students answered both ways (the lines and the ‘grid’), commonly with conflicting answers. In such instances, assessors will mark the first set of answers (the lines) only.

Students would be well advised to use the blank manuscript paper (page 9 of the examination) for their ‘rough working out’ and then transfer their answers to the preferred and appropriate method response (lines or ‘grid’). It seems that many students are ignoring the EITHER/OR instructions written on the paper (see page 8).

Many of the higher scoring answers used the Harmonic Grid. However, some of the students who used it demonstrated some serious misunderstandings about harmony. An example of this regarding chord 2:

Bass note *E*
 Quality *minor*
 Complete name E minor – **second inversion**

Capital and lower case for Major/Minor tonalities were often used inconsistently. One difficult example was: **E minor – a/E – F (sic) diminished – b – c**. In this instance, if chord two is taken as being ‘A minor’, then the last two should be viewed as ‘B minor’ and ‘C minor’, particularly since the diminished chord (3) appears to indicate an understanding of the need to differentiate between the various chord qualities – an issue made even clearer by the very layout/nature of the harmonic grid.

Note: Despite advice in past *Report for Teachers* for the ‘Aural and written examinations’ for this study, many students continue to use upper case Roman numerals exclusively. They then identify only the root note of, for example, minor chords and, therefore, present incomplete answers. Students should utilise the large case/small case Roman numeral system for chord progression answers, unless there is a strong historical reason for their not doing so, such as an advanced theory student who has years of experience using only the upper case Roman numeral system. In such an instance it is necessary that the quality/character/type of the chord be identified clearly along with the scale degree. For example, IV Minor or IV min; II diminished, II dim or II^o

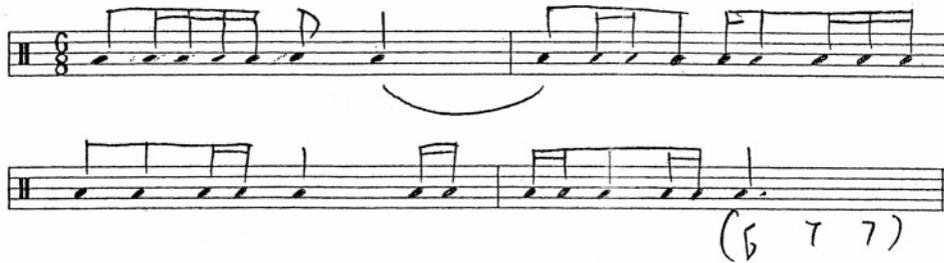
Part 3 – Rhythms

Question 5 – Transcription of Rhythms

This question was generally very well answered. Most students worked out that almost all of the rhythmic figures to be transcribed appeared elsewhere in other parts. Common problems were with the reversed rhythm in the last bar to be transcribed (bar 9 of the excerpt) – especially the semi-quaver to dotted to quaver figure (beat 4). A significant number of

students omitted the very first dotted quaver rest, despite examples of the two-beat figure being in both the preceding and following bars, and in the same (harmonica) part. Many students failed to include the 'dot' when a figure involved a dotted-quaver. Some students made their task clearly more difficult by transcribing pitch as well.

Question 6 – Transcription of a rhythm



Although many students wrote excellent transcriptions, others had difficulties to varying degrees.

Problems included the following:

- the syncopation in bar 2 (resulting from the tie between bar 1 to bar 2 or a rest on the first quaver beat of bar 2) presented difficulties
- students had trouble with the various syncopations in bar two
- some students transcribed the excerpt as if it was in '6/4'
- a significant number of students transcribed the excerpt as if it was in 'common' time, resulting in some extremely complicated rhythms
- a few students wrote crotchets or minims exclusively and rarely with any clear durational correlation to the relative lengths of the quavers, semi-quavers, crotchets, and dotted crotchets (or crotchet tied to a quaver) of the '6/8' excerpt
- many students did not keep track of the pulse as given from the count-in and as a result transcriptions did not end on the correct beat (the 4th quaver-beat or second dotted crotchet of bar 4)
- some students used so many unnecessary rests that they confused themselves
- some students wrote ligatures across bar lines (this practice is acceptable when the rhythmic integrity is maintained, but almost invariably it was not)

Note: When writing rhythms, students should use note heads. In situations where there are a number of notes, stick notation is not always clear. Also, students should apportion notes within bars rather than squeezing them to the front and leaving large gaps at the end. This might be overcome most easily by encouraging students to use the blank manuscript (on page 13 of the paper) for working out an answer and then transferring a legible version to the staff where the final answer is entered.

Section B – Prescribed ensemble works

There were many outstanding responses to the questions in this section.

The following lists some general issues:

- Some students were unaware that all questions in Section B related to the prescribed work that they identified as having studied.
- The questions were often not read carefully enough. The need to read the question and analyse its requirements cannot be over-stressed. Some students did not tick the box (on page 14) to indicate which of the prescribed works they had studied.
- When asked to **discuss** or **describe**, many students presented responses that lacked sufficient levels of detail, as if they had been asked to **identify**. The marks available for each response type should serve to provide an indication of the degree of detail, understanding, knowledge and/or insight expected.
- Many students compared their prescribed works to *different* pieces they had performed in a school-based ensemble or had heard at some other live performance, thereby not following the instruction that comparisons were to be made between two versions of their selected prescribed work (not the prescribed work and some other ensemble work).
- Some students compared the written score to a recording, ignoring the requirements: 'describe two interpretations in performance, and/or to address the extent to which 'the interpretations in performance, differ, and why?'.
- Some writing was almost indecipherable (spelling and the quality of handwriting was of concern).

Students who had studied *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band* appeared to be unable to compare two performances of the songs. Most students who studied *Sergeant Pepper's ...* compared only two versions of one of the songs (e.g. the original and the Joe Cocker version of *With a Little Help from My Friends*), occasionally trying to argue that the one song was sufficiently representative of the entire work. Some responses compared versions of two different songs by two different artists and then attempted to refer them back to the original Beatles material. (This is an extremely convoluted approach to a fairly straightforward task). Others selected one song from the album and a completely different song (not from the album) seemingly because the lead singers are both male and there are guitars and drums in both songs. Most students did not know how to assess/analyse the entire work as a conceptual whole.

Students who selected the Bach cantata, the Mozart quintet or the Holst suite had a better understanding and referred to more than one section or movement in their responses. However, some indicated that they had not heard two versions of the recording while some compared performances by school-based ensembles to one professional recording. Across the enrolment, *The Antarctica Suite* was probably tackled the best of all.

Some written statements, regarding a number of works, were offensive, especially in reference to conductors of ensembles, composers or soloists. It is acceptable for students to make critical assessments of performance quality, technical proficiency, accuracy, but ill informed value judgments should not be included in examination responses.

NOTE: Possible responses for each question are a guide only. The various aspects/issues presented are certainly not exhaustive. The possible responses or characteristics include examples of salient points and/or characteristics of each of the considerations to be addressed regarding each of the question's components. A brief discussion about student responses, both overall and with focus upon the specific prescribed work, follows each segment.

Question 7 – Correct and possible responses

Question	Marks	Mozart	Holst	Bach	Westlake	Lennon/ McCartney
7a. Identify the main melody instrument/s or voice/s that perform at the commencement of the excerpt you have studied	1	Clarinet	(muted) Cornet I and Euphonium	Soprano	Clarinet I and Violin	Voice
7b. Describe characteristics of the melody introduced by the instrument/s or voice/s that you have identified above	4	Description might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compass • angularity/linearity • diatonic/chromatic • staccato/legato • rhythmic characteristics (e.g. syncopated/'straight') • relationship to the accompaniment parts and/or the harmonies 				
7c. Select another instrument or voice that plays a supporting role and discuss how its part relates to the main melody.	5	Discussion might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • harmonic underpinning (e.g. arpeggios, chords, etc) • rhythmic support/contrast • direct (consecutive) harmonisation • imitation • phrase/s, passage/s in response 				

Question 7a

- Some students were unaware of what constitutes a melody. Many students identified **every** instrument as having the melody, especially students that studied the Beatles work (bass, voice, piano, guitar) and the Bach cantata (soprano, alto, tenor, bass). For the *Westlake*, a large number of students indicated that the guitar had the melody in the excerpt.

- Some students named an instrument that clearly did not (or would not) have the melody, e.g. piano often for *Sgt Pepper's...* basso continuo or oboe for the Bach.
- Most students who studied Mozart and Holst, correctly identified the instrument/s that had the melody in the excerpt provided.

Question 7b

This question did not require a personal interpretation or critical response.

- Students should use musical language to describe what they see (or hear). For example, with respect to a basic analysis of the characteristics of a melody, exactly what is meant by 'it floats like a feather in the wind', especially if this is all that is written as a response to the question. Many students did refer to whether or not the melody proceeded by leaps or steps but commonly without mentioning many (or any) other issues such as: the harmonic implications of the melody, repetition, the use of sequence, pitch levels/tessitura/range, contour and rhythm.
- Some students focused their response on issues related to performance considerations or techniques (e.g. 'demands a nice voice' or a performer 'should not use too much vibrato').
- If a student wrongly identified the melody instrument for Question 7a, it was still possible to attain full marks for 7b because of the wording of the question – 'describe *characteristics of the melody* ... that you have identified above'. As such, the characteristics of the melody instrument identified for Question 7a could be described, even if the instrument/s named did not in fact have the melody. However, many students who incorrectly identified the melody instrument/s for Question 7a, wrote instrument-dependent (often 'generic') responses about the instrument rather than the characteristics of the melody that they had identified.
- Many students who had studied *Sergeant Pepper's...* described the character of the vocals, or the 'hidden' meaning of the text, instead of the characteristics of the melody itself.

Specific works

Mozart	Holst	Bach	Westlake	Lennon/McCartney
Many very good answers, with most discussing melodic intervals and phrasing.	Many students discussed the timbre of the instruments rather than the characteristics of the melody itself.	Some very good answers, often focused upon the augmentation of the chorale melody.	Many very good and well focused answers that demonstrated significant and relevant understanding and high-level analytical skills, and the nature of the work in dealing with the various elements of music.	Many vague descriptions of the lyrics and/or the meaning of the songs (even different songs from within the collection) rather than a focus on musical issues and/or elements.

Question 7c

- Many students did not heed the instruction to **discuss** the relationship to the melody, especially with respect to how the given 'instrument or voice ... plays a supporting role' in relation 'to the main melody'.
- Many wrote about more than one instrument, even though the question asked that they 'select *another* instrument or voice ...'.
- Few students were able to demonstrate an understanding of the harmonic implications of the supporting part that they had selected to discuss.
- Students often made up their own definitions of performance instructions within the printed score as an attempt to support their discussion.

Specific works

Mozart	Holst	Bach	Westlake	Lennon/McCartney
Many wrote about the <i>alberti bass</i> effect or the 3 upper string parts as an instrument. (A possible response, but it needs to be justified clearly, but rarely was.)	Some students chose to discuss the flute part, even though it plays for only 2 ½ bars. Most students selected the clarinets which was an appropriate instrumental line because they played the principal supporting line to the solo parts.	The keyboard part was often chosen as the supporting instrument, rather than treating it as a ‘reduction’ of the orchestral part. Such responses were far too long and often vague and/or incorrect.	Many students wrote excellent responses regarding the countermelody in the flute parts.	Piano or bass were the instruments most often chosen. Many students discussed issues related to the recording of the part in a ‘supporting role’ rather than how it ‘relates to the main melody’.

Question 8

Question	Marks	Approaches to responses
<p>Discuss performance style considerations in preparing for a performance of the work you have studied. Refer to <i>at least three</i> of the following to support your answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrumentation • Harmony • Rhythm • Texture • Phrasing and articulation <p>Your answer may refer to but should not focus upon the score excerpt printed in the data book.</p>	15	<p>Marks were awarded for a written discussion that demonstrated knowledge of strategies to prepare for a performance of the work (or specific section/segment of the work) with particular emphasis upon stylistic issues/considerations. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge of the characteristics of the three (or more) aspects with particular reference to common practice of the period/era/style • understanding of the significance of the three (or more) aspects selected – particularly any additional, supporting information and/or reference to additional (i.e. more than three) aspects. • demonstrated insight into the musical trends of the time of the writing of the selected excerpt/work.

A significant number of students wrote outstanding responses to this question.

However:

- some students presented obviously pre-prepared answers. There were numerous highly-learned definitions and/or discussions of Classical or Baroque or 20th Century Music, but with no reference to the work studied.
- some students presented a description of the structure/form of the work, what instrument plays what and where, the harmonic outline, etc but included no reference at all to performance style considerations.
- some students did not refer to one of the prescribed works, but wrote about their own experiences when preparing for performances of *other* pieces of music.
- many students adopted an approach that was generally focused upon what the conductor and/or players need to consider when rehearsing/practising, but never addressed the issue of performance style considerations. Some wrote almost exclusively about the need to ‘practise your technique’, but did not mention performance style considerations.
- a few students wrote general definitions of three (or more) of the elements to be referred to without relating them to their chosen prescribed work.
- some students referred only to the movement or song featured in the data book while some focused their complete attention on the short excerpt (9 to 13 bars) from their chosen prescribed ensemble work presented in the data book. Those who studied *Sergeant Pepper’s ...* adopted these approaches most frequently, but some students who studied the other works did so as well.
- some students did not understand that the term ‘**work**’ (within the question) requires a response that seeks to address the whole of their chosen prescribed piece (or at least some reasonable percentage of it, for example, more than one song, section, or movement). Responses were marked according to what had been written, even if students addressed a small

fraction of the prescribed work that they studied. However, most students who adopted this approach found it very difficult to come up with much to say, let alone ‘**discuss**’.

Some common misconceptions include many students being confused about the concepts related to issues of *texture* versus *timbre*; some students regularly interpreted *rhythm* as meaning *tempo*; many students, particularly those who studied *Sergeant Pepper’s...* thought that *harmony* refers exclusively to vocal part-singing; many students who studied the *Mozart* quintet believed that the work is conducted in performance.

Question 8

Mozart	Holst	Bach	Westlake	Lennon/McCartney
Many good answers. Most discussed <i>instrumentation</i> with many stating that the work was definitely written for basset horn and how one can tell. Many students presented fine discussions focused upon various performance style considerations of the Classical period.	Some very good answers, but also some that simply described the programmatic nature of the piece without relating it back to any performance style consideration/s.	Many good answers. Most students discussed <i>instrumentation</i> (‘period’ versus modern instruments). Many very fine discussions focused upon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • different rhythmic interpretations • various relevant Baroque performance techniques • significant period-based performance style considerations. 	Many excellent responses well-focused on at least three of the five performance style considerations identified for consideration. However, there was also a large number of very general descriptions of the music with little or no mention of performance style considerations.	Many students discussed how their music class learned to play a song from the album. Sometimes this approach worked because performance style considerations formed the basis of the discussion. However, this was rarely the case.

Question 9

Question	Marks	Components/aspects of responses
<p>9a. Describe two ‘interpretations in performance’ of the ensemble work you studied this year. You should identify clearly the ensembles/performance groups that performed the two ‘interpretations in performance’ at some point within your response. In your answer you may discuss live and/or recorded performances of any movement/s, section/s or song/s of the ensemble work you have studied this year. Your answer may refer to but should not focus upon the score excerpt printed in the data book.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Descriptions of interpretations in performance could refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the context of the performance, for example live or studio, professional, school-based, original recording, ‘cover version’ • aims of the performance, for example ‘historic’ interpretation • approaches to interpretation of specific elements of music, for example rhythm • ways balance was created across the ensemble and/or within sections of the ensemble • tempo selection • use of instruments, for example period or modern, acoustic or electric • soloists, for example female or male vocalist • approaches to articulation, phrasing.
<p>9b. To what extent do the ‘interpretations in performance’ you have described in part a. differ, and why? In your answer you may discuss live and/or recorded performances of any movement/s, section/s or song/s of the ensemble work you have studied this year. Your answer may refer to but should not focus upon the score excerpt printed in the data book.</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Approaches to this question could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an indepth discussion of about two features of the performances explaining the extent of difference between the ‘interpretations in performance’ • a more broadly based discussion of four or more features of the performances explaining the extent of difference between the ‘interpretations in performance’ • an indication that there were ‘not many’ features/elements of significant difference between the two ‘interpretations in performance’ and then a justification for this perspective.

A large number of students wrote outstanding responses to these questions. The very best responses to Question 9b commonly used a table to highlight the comparisons made.

Problems were noted regarding the following matters:

Some students were not exposed to two different interpretations in performance, indicating that they had heard only one.

Some students could not refer to their chosen prescribed work with appropriate/necessary levels of detail.

Some students intertwined their responses to Parts A and B of the question. These students had difficulty describing two ‘interpretations in performance’ without exclusively basing their response upon the highlighting of their differences.

Perhaps because ensemble work done at school is school-assessed coursework with a new found importance, some students got confused by the wording of this question, mixing up (some) ‘work you have studied’ with ‘the (prescribed) **work** you have studied’. Even though it was printed in bold, many students went off on a completely unrelated tangent to talk about some ensemble work/s they had rehearsed and performed during the year. On page 14 of the examination paper is written ‘all of your responses must relate to this (prescribed) work that you have studied’. Clearly, Questions 7, 8 and 9 are about the prescribed work and students should know what is examinable.

Many students were unable to list the names of the two ensembles that performed their chose prescribed work.

Some students who studied *Sergeant Pepper’s...* commonly compared ‘cover versions’ of two completely different songs. To compare two interpretations, one must consider two versions of the same song. Overall, students who studied *Sergeant Pepper’s...* tended to not perform as well as the others for these questions.

Some students did not answer Question 9b at all, often stating that they could not because they had heard/studied only one interpretation.

Specific works

Mozart	Holst	Bach	Westlake	Lennon/McCartney
<p>Most students described and compared professional performances on period versus modern instruments. Other relevant musical elements were commonly a feature of responses.</p>	<p>Many students based responses on descriptions/discussions/comparisons of US versus British concert band traditions. A few live performances by city/regional or school concert bands were featured, to varying degrees of success.</p>	<p>Local live performance/s were featured, to varying degrees of success.</p>	<p>Most students compared the guitarists' techniques and the acoustics of the recording venues. Some students were under the impression that there was only one recording of this work available.</p>	<p>The best responses compared two interpretations of the same song/s for example, The Beatles and Elton John performing <i>Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds</i> or The Beatles and Billy Connelly performing <i>Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite</i>. It should be noted that, generally, it is easier to compare two interpretations of the same song, rather than interpretations of two different songs. Students who chose this option (two different songs) often had difficulty in structuring their response to this part of the question.</p>