

# IGCSE Music Criteria

## Component 1 – Listening Exam

Students sit the final listening exam for 75 minutes. The exams are externally marked by Cambridge.

## Component 2 – Performing

### A – Confidence, Fluency, Accuracy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is the performance accurate?</li><li>• Does the candidate perform confidently and fluently?</li><li>• Is the candidate's performance stylistically appropriate?</li><li>• Is improvisation fluent, with a sense of direction and purpose?</li></ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The performance is confident and fluent and the level of accuracy is high.</li><li>• Improvisation has a clear sense of direction and purpose as appropriate to the style/stimulus.</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The performance is mainly confident and fluent, but with some errors.</li><li>• Improvisation is strong overall but is not of consistently high quality throughout.</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The performance is moderately accurate, fluent overall, few passages are hesitant/less precise.</li><li>• Improvisation mostly fluent, more limited in range/sense of direction, few passages hesitant.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The general level of accuracy is low and/or the performance is hesitant.</li><li>• Improvisation is hesitant and limited in its range and sense of direction.</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The performance is very inaccurate and hesitant throughout.</li><li>• Improvisation is of low quality and lacking direction.</li></ul>

### B – Choice & Control of Tempo, Coordination with Accompaniment or Ensemble

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does the candidate set a suitable tempo for the music and maintain it throughout the performance?</li><li>• If performing to a backing track or with live accompaniment, is the performance well-coordinated?</li><li>• When performing with others, is there a secure sense of rhythmic ensemble?</li><li>• Does self-accompaniment provide a secure rhythmic foundation for the singing?</li></ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The music is performed at an appropriate tempo throughout, with effective control.</li><li>• The candidate's part is very well coordinated with any backing track or accompaniment.</li><li>• When performing with others, rhythmic coordination with the other musicians is excellent.</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The tempo is appropriate but there are some small fluctuations.</li><li>• The candidate's part is mostly well coordinated with any backing track or accompaniment.</li><li>• Rhythmic coordination with the other musicians is good overall, with some small fluctuations.</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The choice of tempo is not entirely appropriate and there are some fluctuations.</li><li>• The candidate's part is moderately well coordinated with any backing track or accompaniment.</li><li>• When performing with others, rhythmic coordination with the other musicians is moderate.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The choice of tempo is inappropriate and/or there are frequent fluctuations.</li><li>• The candidate's part is not securely coordinated with any backing track or accompaniment.</li><li>• When performing with others, rhythmic coordination with the other musicians is not secure.</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The performance has no consistent sense of pulse.</li><li>• There is little coordination with any backing track or accompaniment.</li><li>• When performing with others, there is little rhythmic coordination with the other musicians.</li></ul>

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## C – Character, Style, Ensemble Awareness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the candidate perform any markings written into the score by the composer?</li> <li>• In music that is not notated, has the candidate given due consideration to musicality?</li> <li>• How sensitive is their phrasing?</li> <li>• Are stylistic conventions followed?</li> <li>• Is the candidate’s part well balanced when performing with others?</li> <li>• If the style of the music requires it, is articulation and phrasing well matched to the other performers?</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A characterful performance with excellent attention to dynamics, phrasing, articulation, convention</li> <li>• Dynamic balance is excellent and phrasing and articulation are well matched where applicable.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance has character, with good attention to dynamics, phrasing, articulation</li> <li>• Dynamic balance is good and phrasing and articulation are mostly well matched.</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance has some character, but there is inconsistent attention to expressive elements</li> <li>• Some awareness of dynamic balance, and articulation and phrasing are moderately well matched.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is limited attention to dynamics and/or phrasing and articulation.</li> <li>• Limited awareness of dynamic balance, or of matching articulation and phrasing.</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is little attention to dynamics, phrasing and articulation.</li> <li>• Little awareness of dynamic balance, or of matching articulation and phrasing.</li> </ul>

## D – Technical Control of the Instrument

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the candidate perform with suitable quality, variety and evenness of tone?</li> <li>• How well do they handle the specific factors which apply to their instrument?</li> </ul>
5	• Candidate demonstrates excellent control in all areas of technique appropriate to the instrument.
4	• Candidate demonstrates good technical control but with an area of minor concern.
3	• Candidate demonstrates sufficient technique to perform the piece adequately, but weakness in some areas of technique reduces the quality of the performance.
2	• Performance is affected by significant issues in some areas of technique.
1	• Performance is affected by weak control in all areas of technique.

## E – The Performance as a Whole

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the candidate chosen music that allows them to show a range of interpretative/technical skills?</li> <li>• How successful is the performance overall?</li> </ul>
5	• The performance is fully engaging. The candidate demonstrates well-developed skills, performing music which makes substantial interpretative and technical demands.
4	• The performance is convincing. The candidate demonstrates a range of secure skills, performing music with a variety of interpretative and technical demands.
3	• The performance is reasonably successful. The candidate demonstrates a range of skills, performing music which makes moderate interpretative and technical demands.
2	• Performance of music which makes few demands, and the range of skills demonstrated is limited.
1	• A performance of music which makes very simple demands, through which the candidate demonstrates a narrow range of skills.

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## Component 3 – Composing

<b>A – Ideas</b>	
5	• Strong and inventive ideas that suggest a keen sense of aural awareness and (in Composition 2) a convincing response to the candidate's stated intentions in relation to the chosen area of study.
4	• Good musical ideas, showing a secure sense of musical inventiveness, but lacking imagination or range and (in Composition 2) a mostly convincing response to the candidate's stated intentions in relation to the chosen area of study.
3	• Reasonable musical ideas displaying some aspects of inventiveness, but not always secure or consistent and (in Composition 2) a partly convincing response to the candidate's stated intentions in relation to the chosen area of study.
2	• Only a small range of simple and/or awkward ideas and (in Composition 2) a limited response to the candidate's stated intentions in relation to the chosen area of study.
1	• Very weak ideas with little or no contrast and (in Composition 2) no evidence of a link to the candidate's stated intentions in relation to the chosen area of study.

<b>B – Structure</b>	
5	• Clear and appropriate structure, with inventive use of elements creating contrast and continuity in the composition as a whole.
4	• Effective in overall structure, with good attention to aspects of contrast and continuity, although showing some imbalance between sections.
3	• Reasonable attention to structure, although perhaps over-reliant on repetition and limited in its sense of the overall concept.
2	• Structure evident in some clear sections, but with obvious imbalances, and a limited use of contrast and continuity.
1	• Weak structure, with little sense of contrast and continuity.

<b>C – Use of Medium</b>	
5	• Imaginative use of resources throughout, displaying strong aural awareness and revealing a broad range of inventive and varied textures.
4	• Effective use of resources overall, and displaying a good range of textures, although lacking elements of imagination and/or invention in places.
3	• Reasonable use of resources; a fair range of workable textures, with some consideration of detail, but with notable impracticalities in balance or occasional passages of awkward writing.
2	• Limited use of resources, and keeping to simple textures and narrow registers, with restricted use of textural variety.
1	• Basic use of resources, with little evidence that musical texture has been understood.

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<b>D – Compositional Technique</b>	
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventive and confident use of techniques to extend, develop, connect ideas, with convincing use of harmony in styles where appropriate, demonstrating consistent aural familiarity across a wide range of techniques.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective use of techniques to extend, develop and connect ideas, with effective use of harmony in styles where this is appropriate, and demonstrating good aural familiarity across a range of relevant techniques.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable and generally secure use of techniques to extend and/or develop ideas, with partly effective use of harmony in styles where this is appropriate, but perhaps using stock devices across a limited range.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some attempt to use techniques to develop or extend ideas but revealing only a limited aural imagination; any use of harmony is limited in effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little use of techniques; any use of harmony is ineffective.</li> </ul>

<b>E – Score or Commentary</b>	
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and well-presented notation showing consistent attention to musical and performing detail.</li> <li>• A detailed commentary, providing a consistently informative and accurate description of the structure and content of the composition.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coherent and clear notation, but with some ambiguities, inaccuracies or omissions.</li> <li>• A fairly detailed commentary, providing an informative and mostly accurate description of the structure and content of the composition.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly accurate notation, but lacking attention to detail (e.g. omitted dynamics) and/or with unclear layout.</li> <li>• A somewhat generalized commentary, providing a partly informative and accurate description of the structure and content of the composition.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partly accurate notation, but with frequent problems with rhythm, pitch and/or layout. Limited performance instructions given.</li> <li>• A brief and general commentary, providing evidence that some aspects of the structure and content of the composition have been understood.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor presentation and/or incomplete notation.</li> <li>• A weak commentary, suggesting that the structure and content of the composition have been only superficially or incompletely understood.</li> </ul>