

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2013 Assessment Report

Music Level 1

- 91093 Demonstrate aural and theoretical skills through transcription**
- 91094 Demonstrate knowledge of conventions used in music scores**

COMMENTARY

Candidates are encouraged to check the musical detail in their answers and ensure that they follow all instructions carefully. The correct use of musical terms and notation is critical if candidates are to achieve at Merit and Excellence levels. Where musical evidence is missing or inaccurate, this is generally the determining factor as to whether the standard is achieved or not.

STANDARD REPORTS

91093 Demonstrate aural and theoretical skills through transcription

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- identified tonic chords
- identified one cadential progression
- attempted to label cadences, although they were often mislabelled even though the chords were correctly identified
- used chords in bracketed cadences that did not form a traditional cadence (e.g. V-IV)
- correctly identified bars with given note-heads
- identified basic rhythmic progressions
- identified the simple contours well
- identified more than half of the pitches correctly in the simpler patterns.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- were unable to identify tonic chords
- did not use the note heads given or changed the note heads
- were unable to distinguish between major and minor triads
- drew note heads that made the pitches of notes indistinguishable
- did not correctly label cadences
- left the stems or tails off notes in the rhythm exercise
- had the incorrect number of beats in a large number of bars
- filled in bars with notes at random
- left a significant number of bars empty
- used contours which went in the opposite direction to the music
- changed given rhythms
- filled up the manuscript space with random notes.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- identified cadential chords correctly but mislabelled them or did not attempt to label the cadence
- identified some triplet and semiquaver movement although this was not always fully accurate
- wrote the required melody in generally the correct direction
- notated stepwise and smaller intervals with general accuracy.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- accurately identified chords and cadences in sequence
- identified dotted and syncopated rhythms
- transcribed wider interval leaps accurately
- kept track of the beat/metre throughout each extract
- identified subtle differences between stepwise movement and small leaps.

OTHER COMMENTS

Candidates appear to be making strategic decisions about which standards they attempt. Candidates who selected this standard to answer in 2014 generally demonstrated a high level of musical literacy.

91094 Demonstrate knowledge of conventions used in music scores

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- identified where musical terms, symbols and performance directions occurred in the score
- identified the number of musicians required to perform a piece of music
- transcribed music in the treble and bass clefs with accurate key signatures
- showed an understanding of thickness/thinness of texture
- identified transposing instruments
- transposed pitches up a perfect 5th
- showed some understanding of ternary form, either by name or by the identification of sections with bar numbers
- identified the quantity of intervals
- identified a compositional device (i.e. repetition).

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- did not identify the position of musical terms, symbols and performance directions
- did not show transcription skills
- did not show an understanding of textural density
- did not identify which were transposing instruments
- did not demonstrate transposition skills
- mistook texture or era for form
- did not recognise musical sections in a score
- did not demonstrate knowledge of intervals, cadences or compositional devices.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- explained the function of musical terms, symbols and performance directions with a degree of precision (e.g. indicates 84 crotchet beats per minute)
- demonstrated awareness of the appropriate clef for vocal writing (i.e. vocal tenor clef)
- transcribed the alto clef from the treble clef with accurate clef and key signature
- showed understanding of musical texture (i.e. homophonic) and of textural density
- demonstrated understanding of transposing instruments by identifying differing key signatures
- transposed pitches up a 5th and showed understanding by accurately notating the new key signature as well as correctly transposing accidentals
- showed knowledge of minor keys
- understood how to identify ternary form and the sections within it, and how to provide relevant evidence from the musical score
- identified modulation through a knowledge of key signatures
- identified the quantity and quality of two intervals
- demonstrated knowledge of cadences including keys, chords and Roman numerals.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- explained the function and application of musical terms, symbols and performance directions with precision and detail (e.g. identifying the drum kit instrument as the sizzle cymbal)
- showed understanding of the conventions of score layout
- explained the purpose and application of the vocal tenor clef
- made a highly accurate and precise transcription, taking particular care with details such as performance directions, rhythms and musical conventions (e.g. correct clef placement and general alignment of notes)
- showed comprehensive understanding of musical texture by giving specific evidence from the musical score in support of correct identification of the texture

- transposed pitches and key signature up a perfect 5th in a highly accurate and detailed manner, taking care with performance directions (dynamic, slurs) and stem directions
- demonstrated broad knowledge of minor keys
- showed understanding of modulation and key signatures by identifying clear indicators of a key change
- consistently identified the quantity and quality of intervals
- consistently demonstrated knowledge of cadences
- identified variations within a selected musical section.

OTHER COMMENTS

Candidates who received Merit or Excellence showed they fully understood what the questions were asking for, and answered in detail. The difference between Merit and Excellence performance sometimes came down to precision. This was particularly the case in relation to transcription and transposition. Some candidates provided insufficient specific detail to demonstrate comprehensive analysis or depth of perception.

There was a tendency for candidates to “describe” rather than “explain” the reasons why a score layout changed. When asked to give evidence in support of textural recognition, they relied on a generic answer or a general description of the texture, rather than specific and accurate evidence based on the musical score.

There were still many instances where students overlooked the instruction to write chord indications in Roman numerals. Candidates frequently neglected to check that they had included performance directions, particularly in the transcription and transposition tasks.