

## Part A: Commentary

In 2015 there was a wide range of responses from candidates across all standards as was to be expected. Candidates who achieved well showed a sound grasp of musical terminology and a clear and precise understanding of musical elements and features, as well as the ability to use musical notation accurately. Candidates who achieved less well often provided generic or descriptive answers, were unclear in their use of musical terminology and were unable to differentiate between various musical elements and features. They also showed a lack of fluency in using musical notation. Teachers and candidates should refer to the Achievement Standards and Assessment Specifications, for more detailed information.

## Part B: Report on standards

### 1. Assessment Report for 91275: Demonstrate aural understanding through written representation

<b>Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified isolated chords rather than pairs or progressions</li> <li>• identified melodic contours over the barline</li> <li>• identified some basic elements and features relating to the given musical extracts</li> <li>• answered just enough in each section to pass.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified chords inaccurately</li> <li>• missed significant melodic contour points such as the highest or lowest note</li> <li>• provided answers that were descriptive instead of using relevant key terms</li> <li>• misread the question.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Merit</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified pairs of chords</li> <li>• transcribed patterns of notes accurately (pitch and rhythm)</li> <li>• were able to define or explain elements and features.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Excellence</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified progressions of three or more chords including 7<sup>th</sup> and sus chords</li> <li>• transcribed musical phrases accurately</li> <li>• described changes in the way elements were used in musical extracts</li> <li>• supported answers with relevant and detailed information.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard specific comments</b>	<p>Candidates often used a range of useful strategies to assist them in identifying chords. However, the markers noted a lack of understanding of cadences in many answers.</p> <p>Some candidates were not able to identify musical elements and often confused them with features.</p> <p>The legibility of some papers provided markers with a challenge, in both music notation and handwriting.</p>

## 2. Assessment Report for 91276: Demonstrate knowledge of conventions in a range of music scores

<b>Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understood basic music concepts such as clefs, key signatures and time signatures</li> <li>were able to identify instruments / voices used in a score</li> <li>identified the quantity of intervals within an octave</li> <li>recognised articulation markings and some performance directions</li> <li>attempted to transcribe and transpose music excerpts</li> <li>notated the bass part of a cadence.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>showed insufficient understanding of basic music concepts and compositional features</li> <li>responded with language that was irrelevant to the particular question</li> <li>failed to understand what they were being asked to do</li> <li>did not attempt to respond to all questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Merit</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transposed and transcribed with general accuracy</li> <li>identified the quantity and quality of intervals within an octave</li> <li>harmonised the cadence with general accuracy, though many failed to raise the leading note in a minor key</li> <li>identified and described compositional features</li> <li>applied the rules of notation with consistency.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Excellence</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transposed accurately for a particular instrument</li> <li>remembered to raise the leading note when writing a cadence in a minor key</li> <li>understood intervals, chords, keys and key relationships</li> <li>described accurately both the quantity and quality of compound intervals</li> <li>gave evidence about a variety of elements and features accurately, precisely and concisely.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard specific comments</b>	<p>The cohort had difficulty notating and using jazz/rock chords (e.g. C, Am), and many failed to consider the key signature or accidentals when deciding whether the chords were major or minor.</p> <p>Candidates need to be aware that the standard prescribes key signatures of no more than four sharps and flats. Transposition to keys beyond this will not be tested, so a response with a key signature of, for example, six sharps would not be correct.</p> <p>Candidates also need to be aware that the amount of space given for responses gives an indication of the detail expected.</p> <p>Many candidates seemed unaware of the difference between: Repetition, Sequence and Imitation.</p>

## 3. Assessment Report for 91277: Demonstrate understanding of two substantial contrasting music works

<b>Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote in very general terms about the music they had studied, referring to the music with adjectives rather than clear musical evidence</li> <li>used musical examples that were inaccurate but demonstrated some understanding of the element or feature being discussed</li> <li>wrote short factual statements that were not developed with any depth.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>did not answer the question with focus – instead of writing about the ONE feature specified in a question, would list a number of facts about a number of different elements or features</li> <li>had significant difficulties with musical notation</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confused the meaning of elements (particularly timbre and texture, form and texture)</li> <li>• repeated evidence across multiple questions</li> <li>• had limited musical vocabulary to provide evidence from the music works.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achieved with Merit</b></p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provided detailed responses that were supported with generally clear and specific evidence from the music work, either descriptively or with musical notation.</li> <li>• planned their responses well to avoid repetition of material across different questions</li> <li>• used musical terminology accurately to demonstrate musical understanding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achieved with Excellence</b></p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provided insightful responses that were supported with detailed and accurate evidence from the music work</li> <li>• made perceptive links between their selected musical evidence and the analytical or contextual information</li> <li>• showed a depth of understanding of musical context and elements/features of the work through clear statements that were comprehensively developed and supported</li> <li>• showed the ability to use musical terminology with confidence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard specific comments</b></p>	<p>Some candidates found this standard challenging due to the choices of material which were presented as “substantial music works”. Most significantly, candidates who had studied works in their entirety (e.g. mass, musical, albums, symphonies, preludes) were unable to provide the depth of answer that would have been possible, if they had focussed on a particular movement or piece. These candidates typically wrote holistic general statements to answer the questions, with musical evidence that was broad rather than specific.</p> <p>Works that worked particularly well for this standard in 2015 included:</p> <p>Bach: Brandenburg No. 5 movement 1          Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra (Mvt 2: Game of Couples)          Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 3 (movement 1)          Desmond: Take Five          Farmer: Fair Phyllis          Farr: Kembang Suling          Faure: Kyrie et Introit (from the Requiem)          Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue          McLeod: Childhood          Psathas: Waiting For The Aeroplane          Queen: Bohemian Rhapsody          Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 (mvt 1)          Zawinul: Birdland</p>