

Assessment Report

On this page

[Level 3 Music 2020](#) ▾

Level 3 Music 2020

Standards [91420](#) [91421](#) [91423](#)

Part A: Commentary

Successful candidates drew on well-developed understanding of musical elements and features across different musical styles in a variety of contexts, as well as showing skills in transcription and realisation. Appropriate language and key terms in responses allowed for ideas to be expressed clearly.

Successful responses included legible music notation, relevant well structured information in text-based responses, and selected works that were substantial enough to show in-depth understanding.

Part B: Report on standards

91420: Integrate aural skills into written representation

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- showed strengths in EITHER written questions or transcription questions, but not both
- gave basic descriptions
- used some correct terminology
- transcribed melodic contours
- transcribed rhythmic patterns
- identified a minimum number of chords and understood which chords would most likely be used in the key.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- left large parts of questions, or whole questions blank
- misunderstood the questions
- were unable to form notes correctly on the stave
- struggled to identify chords and did not demonstrate a grasp of keys
- did not write chord indications in the style asked for
- did not use terminology correctly.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- wrote notation mostly accurately and idiomatically
- identified some chord inversions
- transcribed some melodic phrases accurately
- transcribed some rhythmic phrases accurately
- gave relevant explanations using correct terminology.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- wrote notation accurately and idiomatically
- identified chord inversions, 7ths and sus chords
- transcribed melodic and rhythmic phrases accurately
- gave detailed analytical answers using correct terminology.

Standard-specific comments

Candidates who wrote in pen directly onto the staves were hampered when they needed to make alterations.

Candidates should be encouraged to check for basic notation errors such as stems going the wrong way, bars which do not add up to the time signature, and correct signs for minor chords in both Roman numeral and jazz / rock chord indications.

91421: Demonstrate knowledge of harmonic and tonal conventions in a range of music scores

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- identified isolated chords in root position using a range of standard terminology
- identified tonal centres accurately
- used given harmonic progressions to write accurate bass notes or isolated chords
- identified simple harmonic features in a musical extract, including harmonic rhythm, simple non-harmonic notes and compositional devices.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- had difficulty identifying triads in root position
- had difficulty identifying the tonality of a given extract
- had difficulty writing simple chords or bass notes
- used inaccurate terminology and / or vague statements to describe harmonic features.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- identified chord progressions including inversions
- accurately identified cadences within a tonal centre
- notated consecutive chords including chord inversions with some accuracy

- supported the identification of harmonic features in a musical extract with details such as bar numbers, key centres and types of chords used.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- identified more complex chords with accuracy
- accurately labelled and analysed pivot chords in modulating passages
- accurately explained key relationships
- accurately notated a range of harmonic resources including seventh chords and suspensions
- demonstrated a secure understanding of different stylistic contexts by writing with musical accuracy and flair, maintaining the given style
- accurately explained the function of specific harmonic features such as inversions and chromatic notes
- accurately identified a range of harmonic features in a musical extract, supported by appropriate examples.

Standard-specific comments

Successful candidates attempted all parts of the question and showed a well-developed understanding of harmonic progression and features over a range of contexts and applied this to writing harmony in different contexts.

Secure responses were sometimes marred by poor notational skills such as: ambiguous note heads, incorrect tail direction and inaccurate durations. The legibility of handwriting was also important in ensuring that an answer was able to be fully deciphered.

91423: Examine the influence of context on a substantial music work

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote generalised statements about the contexts and their influence on the work
- presented responses that were musically analytical but did not make use of the analysis to support a response to the influence of context

- wrote factual information that was not developed in depth
- supported responses with simple musical evidence.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- wrote about works that were not substantial
- presented pre-prepared responses that did not respond to the question
- provided in-depth analyses of song lyrics or plots unsupported by musical or contextual evidence
- used limited musical terminology
- used very broad evidence that did not specifically support their response
- provided detailed plot synopses of musicals, long biographical accounts of the artists/composers, essays about contextual/historical events and a range of other information that was unsupported by any reference to the musical work.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- provided clear and detailed explanations of the influence of context on the conception, production, and interpretation of the work and clearly responded to the question
- provided specific musical evidence that supported key points, presented descriptively or as musical quotations on the manuscript provided
- planned their essay to ensure that it responded specifically to the question
- used accurate and purposeful musical terminology throughout their response.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- showed an in-depth understanding of both the question and the influence of context on the work
- were able to make insightful links to wider contextual understanding
- clearly defined the parameters of their responses and provided in-depth and insightful discussion supported by relevant perceptive musical evidence.

Standard-specific comments

Candidates were generally well prepared for this standard, however pre-prepared responses often hindered the candidate's capacity to respond specifically to the question – particularly when responses were pre-structured with a paragraph on conception, production and interpretation.

Candidates should use carefully selected, and relevant, musical evidence to support key points. A lengthy analysis is not required. Some candidates were unable to provide in-depth responses as their works were not substantial – this was particularly apparent for short, stand-alone songs.

Examples of 'substantial music works' that worked well in 2020 were:

- Concerto for Orchestra (Bartok)
- Brandenburg Concerto No.5 (Bach)
- Te Papa (Farr)
- Rhapsody in Blue (Gershwin)
- Different Trains (Reich)
- Symphony No. 5 (Shostakovich)
- The Rite of Spring (Stravinsky)
- Pictures at an Exhibition (Mussorgsky)

Candidates who have studied vocal works and musicals should be careful to ensure that lyric analyses and/or plot summaries are used to support the response to the question regarding context rather than be the main body of the response. This is also true of lengthy biographies or accounts of historical events / eras.

[Music subject page](#)

Previous years' reports

[2019 \(PDF, 275KB\)](#)

[2018 \(PDF, 117KB\)](#)

[2017 \(PDF, 49KB\)](#)

[2016 \(PDF, 243KB\)](#)

Copyright © New Zealand Qualifications Authority