

# 2024 NCEA Assessment Report

<b>Subject:</b>	Music
<b>Level:</b>	3
<b>Achievement standard(s):</b>	91420, 91421, 91423

## General commentary

The three examinations provided candidates with suitable opportunities to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. Candidates who received higher grades were well-prepared and attempted all parts of each question. They applied their knowledge of elements and features appropriately and did not provide pre-planned answers.

## Report on individual achievement standard(s)

### Achievement standard 91420: Integrate aural skills into written representation

#### Assessment

The examination consisted of three questions based on different genres of music. Candidates were required to answer all three questions.

#### Commentary

Candidates who gained Achievement or above were confident in using musical notation and terminology. Their responses indicated that they had read the questions and understood the instructions.

#### Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- responded in a very basic way to most questions
- notated contours and / or rhythmic patterns, rather than phrases
- used and understood some basic terminology
- gave simple descriptions of elements and features in the music
- identified individual chords, but not inversions, and did not always indicate major or minor.

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

- explained the effect of elements and features on the music using correct terminology
- identified chord progressions and some inversions and / or 7th chords
- notated melody and rhythm clearly with a moderate degree of accuracy.

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

- responded to all types of questions consistently
- notated melody and rhythm accurately and clearly, with correct grouping and formation of signs and symbols
- identified chord phrases, including suspensions, 7th chords, and inversions
- used correct terminology with understanding in detailed responses
- analysed elements and features in relationship to the music.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not understand basic terminology
- drew contours only for melodic transcription
- struggled to identify chords, including the difference between minor and major
- did not write notation clearly
- misinterpreted what was required in the question, and provided an irrelevant response.

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## **Achievement standard 91421: Demonstrate understanding of harmonic and tonal conventions in a range of music scores.**

### Assessment

Three questions provided opportunities for candidates to demonstrate analysis and realisation skills, using knowledge of elements and features. Candidates were required to answer all three questions.

### Commentary

A range of responses was provided across the three questions. Candidates who received higher grades showed consistency in their analysis and realisation skills. They completed all parts of each question and were careful and methodical in their approach. Accuracy and attention to detail was evident in various ways, including the analysis of inversions, added notes and non-harmonic notes, and in the realisation of chords in varying styles. The ability to analyse important tonal and harmonic features, rather than all aspects, was also demonstrated.

Candidates who did not complete all parts of a question, or who were not able to demonstrate consistent ability across the required skills, struggled to gain more than an Achieved grade.

Legibility of answers was generally acceptable. Many candidates used pencil only. A number of candidates used the extra pages at the back of the booklet and most, but not all, referenced the additional answers with a note on the appropriate page.

### Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- analysed chords and some chord inversions with accuracy
- analysed and realised basic triads and / or bass notes
- demonstrated awareness of harmonic features
- demonstrated strength in one part of a question only.

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

- analysed progressions of chords accurately relative to the key identified, including tonality of individual chords
- analysed and realised some added note chords
- attempted passing notes with some success
- realised chord progressions accurately, which showed some stylistic appropriateness
- identified and described harmonic features.

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

- provided consistency in the quality of their answers for all parts of questions
- analysed added note chords in a straightforward way with consistent accuracy
- realised chord progressions in a stylistically appropriate way that showed attention to detail
- demonstrated confidence in writing passing notes
- identified pivot chords and second inversion chords accurately
- identified specific harmonic features and were able to explain their function or impact.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- omitted parts of each question or left them incomplete
- did not analyse basic triads accurately (including inversions)
- did not realise chords or bass notes accurately
- wrote answers that were not legible
- did not identify harmonic devices.

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## **Achievement standard 91423: Examine the influence of context on a substantial music work**

### **Assessment**

Four options provided a range of topics for essay responses. Candidates were required to choose one option to answer.

### **Commentary**

While good use was made of the planning page, many candidates wrote in excess of the word limit, which in most cases did not improve their overall grade. Candidate responses indicate that more attention regarding how to structure thinking in the essay format would be beneficial in preparation for this standard.

Candidates should be advised that pre-prepared responses often hinder the capacity to respond specifically to the question, particularly when responses are pre-structured with a paragraph on each of conception, production, and interpretation. Many responses provided detail about the concept in the questions (e.g. occasions, values, or emotions) without actually referencing the music.

Some candidates were unable to provide in-depth responses, as their works were not substantial – this was particularly apparent for short, stand-alone songs. It would be good to see more candidates exploring substantial New Zealand works for this standard.

Candidates should be careful to ensure that lyric analyses, plot summaries, and social commentary are used to support the response to the question, rather than being the main body of the response. It

is important to demonstrate knowledge of the influence on the context on the music, as well as the thematic content of the plot / lyrics / social history.

Please note that where works studied include mature content, sensitive topics, or offensive language, candidates need to be taught how to address these appropriately for an examination context. Consideration should be given as to what type of material is suitable for a national examination.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- provided responses that had some relationship to the question being answered
- provided large amounts of factual and musical detail that did not support the response to the question
- 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 any depth
- supported responses with simple musical evidence.

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
- provided relevant, 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
- made insightful links to wider contextual understanding
- structured and clearly defined the parameters of their responses
- provided in-depth, clear, and insightful discussion, supported by relevant and perceptive musical evidence.

Candidates who were awarded **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
- demonstrated limited ability to use musical terminology
- used very broad evidence that did not specifically support their response
- provided detailed biographical or contextual information that was unsupported by any musical information.