

Candidate 2 — Syncopated Song

Composing music

The candidate indicated in their review that the main 'A' theme starts at bar 5. The melodic shape, harmony and the syncopated rhythm of bars 5 and 6 are effective. Bars 9–10 and 13–14 are the same as bars 5 and 6, and each two-bar answering phrase shows competent development. Bars 11 and 12 feature development of the harmony, and imaginative melodic and rhythmic development. Bars 15 and 16 initially use the same harmonies as bar 11, but further develop the harmony in bar 16. Bar 15 repeats the melodic idea of an ascending sequence used in bar 11, but this time using crotchets to provide rhythmic contrast. At bar 17, the first bar of theme 'A' is repeated up an octave, providing some contrast to the preceding phrases. At bar 19, this one-bar idea is imaginatively repeated three times, over changing, strong harmonies.

The candidate stated, in their review, that the 'B' section starts at bar 23. There is a harmonic weakness in the lead-in to this section, which would be strengthened by a dominant chord in G major, in bar 22. This section is in the key of G major, however, the candidate has not changed the key signature until bar 39. This does not affect the marking, as it is the audio file that is marked. The A minims in bars 23 and 27 over G chords are not convincing. The candidate could have considered changing the harmony for these notes.

The candidate imaginatively develops this contrasting 'B' theme by using a kind of diminution in bars 31 and 32. The candidate creatively uses the start of theme 'B' and the diminution idea in bars 31 and 32 for the introduction.

There is further, creative rhythmic development of theme 'A' in bars 39 and 40, and the interrupted cadence in bars 45–46, is particularly effective.

This is a good composition, which demonstrates musical ideas which have been developed competently.

The candidate was awarded **14 marks**.

Composing review

This review has three clear sections — main decisions, development and strengths/improvements. The candidate uses a mixture of prose and bullet points, which is acceptable.

The candidate includes some information about structure, the initial key and the rhythm in the 'B' section. They could have given more information about the new key used at the 'B' section, or significant chord progressions, such as the repeated opening phrases starting at bars 5, 9 and 13 using C and F chords. Overall, there is a satisfactory account of the main decisions made.

There is a detailed explanation of how the candidate explored and developed the musical ideas. The candidate makes appropriate, detailed reference to melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, structural, and timbral elements.

The candidate gives clear details of strengths. There are several, accurate statements about strengths linked to musical detail, for example 'I liked the contrast rhythmically between the A section with lots of syncopation and the B section with much less and a more legato feel'.

The candidate was awarded **9 marks**.