

Candidate 5 — Standby

Composing music

This instrumental piece is written for lead guitar, rhythm guitar, bass guitar, MIDI keyboard and drum kit. In the composing review, the candidate acknowledged that they had used a drum loop. The piece demonstrates a range of musical ideas which have been developed competently and appropriately.

The candidate has produced a very clear, informative performance plan. The chord structure, and role of each instrument, is clear in each of the four sections.

The candidate has a clear sense of phrasing, and there is a question and answer feel to the melodic writing. In the review, the candidate has improvised the guitar melodies, which use grace notes and pitch bends. These are appropriate in this style.

In part 2, the chord structure changes. The original four chords are heard in a different order, which shows competent harmonic development. Using the MIDI keyboard for the chord progression gives this section a different character and shows appropriate development of the original ideas.

Part 3 returns to the original chord structure. A simple, repeating MIDI keyboard melody, consisting entirely of crotchets within the range of a 5th, provides a straightforward contrast to the previous melodic improvisations. The candidate could have experimented with rhythm and pitch to develop this melody.

In part 4, the music changes key, which gives the piece a lift. There is an effective use of an ascending minor scale in the MIDI keyboard and further melodic development in the improvised lead guitar. The fade out is stylistic and works well in this type of composition.

Overall, this is a good composition, demonstrating a range of musical ideas which have been developed competently.

The candidate was awarded **13 marks**.

Composing review

The candidate has chosen to use bullet points in the composing review, which is acceptable.

There is a limited account of the main decisions made. Detailed information about keys, chords and structure would enhance this review.

There is sufficient explanation of how the candidate explored and developed the musical ideas. The candidate has clearly identified strengths and areas for improvement, referring to the drum kit part, a key change and a transition section. This is an example of a review that spreads across three mark ranges.

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.