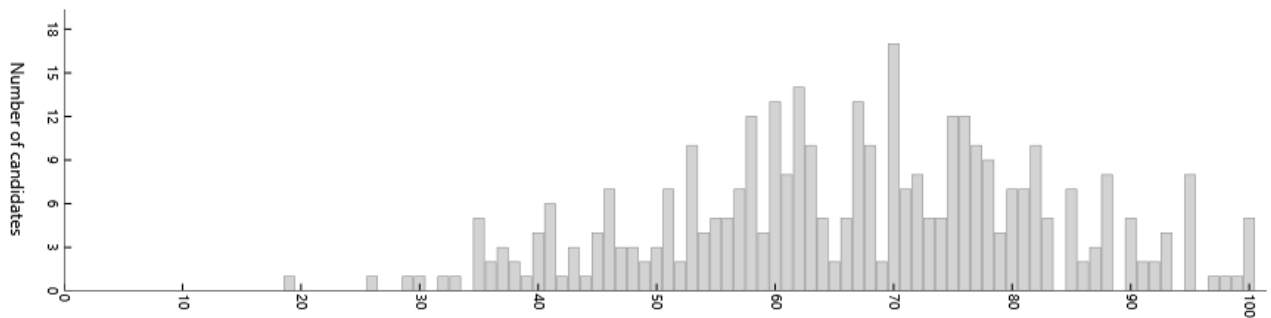




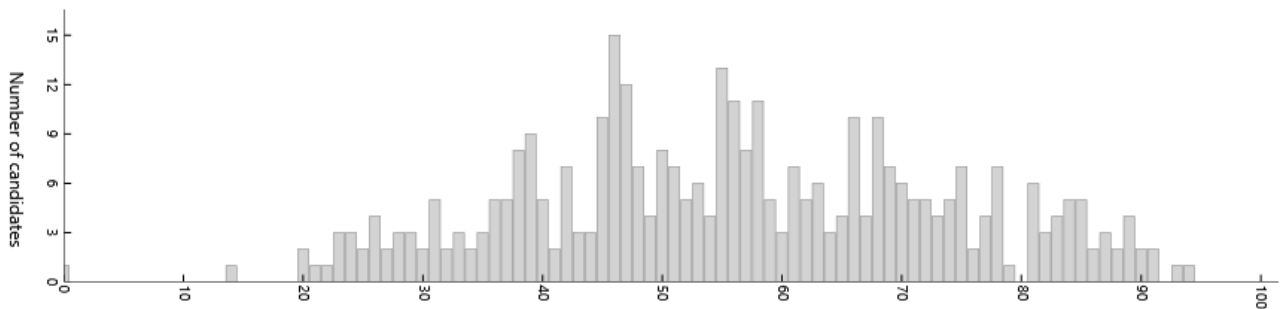
Summary report of the 2017 ATAR course examination: Music

Year	Number who sat all examination components			Number of absentees from all examination components
	Contemporary Music	Jazz	Western Art Music (WAM)	
2017	63	34	263	1
2016	80	26	268	2

Examination score distribution – Practical



Examination score distribution – Written



Summary

Candidates completed a practical and written examination.

Practical examination

The range of practical examinations consisted of Option 1: Performance, Option 2: Composition portfolio and Option 3: Performance and composition portfolio. The spread of marks ranged from 18.78% to 100% and the standard deviation was 15.89%.

Attempted by 360 candidates	Mean 66.62%	Max 100.00%	Min 18.78%
Option 1: Performance			
Attempted by 343 candidates	Mean 66.75%	Max 100.00%	Min 18.78%
Section means were:			
<i>Criterion 1: Technique</i>	Mean 62.47%		
Attempted by 343 candidates	Mean 24.99(/40)	Max 40.00	Min 4.44
<i>Criterion 2: Style/Expression</i>	Mean 64.38%		
Attempted by 343 candidates	Mean 32.19(/50)	Max 50.00	Min 8.33
<i>Criterion 3: Program requirements</i>	Mean 95.66%		
Attempted by 343 candidates	Mean 9.57(/10)	Max 10.00	Min 5.00

Due to the small candidature of some of the options, no statistical analysis of these examinations is provided.

Written examination

The written examination consisted of three sections – Section One (all contexts), Section Two Parts A and B(i) and B(ii) (context-specific) and Section Three (context-specific). Candidates were required to attempt all questions in the paper. The spread of marks ranged from 0% to 93.52% and the standard deviation was 17.61%.

Attempted by 360 candidates	Mean 56.02% (/100)	Max 93.52%	Min 0.00%
Section One: Aural and analysis	Mean 58.09%		
Attempted by 359 candidates	Mean 20.91(/36)	Max 34.94	Min 3.71
Section Two: Cultural and historical analysis	Part A: Analysis		
	Mean 53.96%		
Attempted by 357 candidates	Mean 5.94(/11)	Max 11.00	Min 0.00
Section Two: Cultural and historical analysis	Part B(i): Short response		
	Mean 60.04%		
Attempted by 357 candidates	Mean 6.60(/11)	Max 11.00	Min 0.92
Section Two: Cultural and historical analysis	Part B(ii): Short response		
	Mean 54.36%		
Attempted by 351 candidates	Mean 6.52(/12)	Max 12.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Theory and composition	Mean 54.88%		
Attempted by 358 candidates	Mean 16.46(/30)	Max 28.58	Min 1.13

Section means for each context were:

		Mean	Max	Min
Section One: Aural and analysis	Contemporary	15.35(/36)	30.18	3.71
	Jazz	16.33(/36)	32.82	7.41
	WAM	22.84(/36)	34.94	6.35
Section Two Part A: Analysis	Contemporary	6.02(/11)	10.39	1.83
	Jazz	4.98(/11)	8.80	2.75
	WAM	6.04(/11)	11.00	0.00
Section Two Part B(i): Compulsory area of study	Contemporary	5.59(/11)	9.75	1.75
	Jazz	6.85(/11)	10.39	2.44
	WAM	6.81(/11)	11.00	0.92
Section Two Part B(ii): Non-compulsory area of study	Contemporary	6.44(/12)	10.50	2.25
	Jazz	6.01(/12)	11.62	0.75
	WAM	6.61(/12)	12.00	0.00
Section Three: Theory and composition	Contemporary	14.44(/30)	25.28	3.33
	Jazz	13.30(/30)	26.45	1.64
	WAM	17.36(/30)	28.58	1.13

General comments

Practical examination

There were 360 candidates enrolled in the practical (performance and/or composition portfolio) examination in 2017. Of these candidates 343 were enrolled in the Performance examination Option 1(a) one context, one instrument and seven were enrolled in Option 1(b) one context, two instruments. Further to this, five candidates were enrolled in Option 2 the Composition portfolio examination and five candidates were enrolled in Option 3 the Performance and Composition portfolio examination. There were several outstanding practical examinations with the mean of Option 3 examination being the highest and the mean of the Option 2 examination being the lowest.

Advice for candidates

- Ensure you give yourself adequate preparation time for warming up prior to the practical examination.
- Use the warm-up time prudently. It is not a time for a final run through of your pieces, it is a time to make sure you have prepared your instrument (rosin, valve oil, cork grease etc.), that you have all equipment (music, backing tracks, bottled water, spare strings, picks, sticks etc.), and that you are warmed up (fingers, vocal cords) before you enter the room.

Advice for teachers

- Ensure that students are provided with plenty of opportunities to perform, both as an ensemble member and as a soloist, to allow them to develop confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills in readiness for the examination.
- Check that the student is examination compliant and that the scores being used match the actual performance.
- As an instrumental or classroom teacher encourage candidates performing to not only practice the notes and terms, but also to consider how they play the notes. Suggestions include getting the candidate to listen to other performers, to practise playing the repertoire they are going to present, as well as recording, listening to and analysing their own rehearsal sessions and performances.

General comments

Written examination

The mean of the examination was 56.02%, an improvement on previous years. The performance of candidates on Section One: Aural and analysis was particularly pleasing with a mean of 58.09% being attained. It was also encouraging to note that most candidates attempted all of the questions in the examination. Those candidates who left spaces or did not complete the examination were often the candidates who wrote essay-style responses to Question 9 instead of extended paragraphs.

Advice for candidates

- Ensure that you answer the extended paragraph question accordingly. Writing essay-style responses is not necessary and will impact negatively on your time management.
- Attempt all questions in the examination. If you do not have particularly strong melodic dictation skills, attempt the rhythm. Marks are awarded for correct rhythm, bar lines and grouping, so attempt these even if you cannot identify the melody notes.
- Take note of the marks allocated for a question and respond accordingly.

Advice for teachers

- Provide students with opportunities to develop aural and analysis skills. There are many online applications available to supplement classroom aural and analysis programs.
- Address any confusion that exists with using the correct serifs for upper case/major chords and dotting the letter 'i' when it is lower case/minor chords in both the harmonic analysis question in the aural section and the identification of chords in the theory section of the examination.
- Ensure that students recognise and are familiar with the range of compositional devices. Syncopation and repetition are rhythmic devices not compositional devices.
- Ensure that students can identify chords in a harmonic progression.
- Give specific instructions and guidance to students on how to write an extended paragraph response to the type of questions that they might encounter in Section Two: Part B(ii). Provide model good answers too. Warn candidates about the risks of writing essay-style responses in this section.

- Prepare students for the examination by ensuring that you cover all syllabus content. Students should be able to identify key features in any work, designated or otherwise. They should be able to apply their knowledge of music elements and features, not just regurgitate facts.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Practical examination

Option 1: Performance

Technique (18 Marks)

Many candidates performed with strong and developed technique in the performance examination but some candidates were less polished than others.

Style/Expression (18 Marks)

The key to a great performance is the stylistic interpretation of the music. Candidates are presenting a performance recital that demonstrates correct realisation of the score instructions (dynamics, tempo etc.), as well as a performance that reflects effective rehearsals with accompanists and backing tracks. However, many candidates are still struggling to achieve high stylistic interpretation marks.

Program requirements (10 Marks)

Most candidates complied with all program requirements and presented an effective repertoire.

Written examination

Section One: Aural and analysis

This section was common to all contexts. Some candidates struggled with harmonic intervals in Question 1 while the majority of candidates attempted Question 2 and achieved full marks. Across contexts, a number of candidates did not attempt Question 3 and Question 4, related to writing major/minor Roman numerals, was done poorly. Question 5 was completed competently by most candidates. Question 6 received a variety of responses that may indicate weaker candidates could not provide accurate answers because of the generic nature of the excerpt used.

Section Two Cultural and historical analysis Part A: Analysis

Contemporary Music (18 Marks)

The majority of candidates attempted this question but many of them struggled with the recognition of key, failing to identify B \flat minor and then D \flat major as the dominant keys of the excerpt. Due to incorrect key identification many candidates could not therefore make a logical relationship between the two keys, with many attempting to make a link, but with responses not listed in the syllabus e.g. the submediant key. Candidates and teachers need to be aware of the syllabus requirements with regards to key identification. Drawing reference to compulsory designated works did not present a difficulty for the candidates but providing substantiation for their response proved more problematic. Some candidates did not read the prompts provided when answering this question.

Jazz (20 Marks)

Surprisingly candidates struggled to answer this question, even though the work selected paralleled a designated work studied this year. Many candidates grappled with identifying the form confusing this with timbre and giving instrumentation instead of sections. Candidates' knowledge of Jazz symbols was poor with many being unable to identify and describe standard symbols on the score.

Western Art Music (21 Marks)

Candidates and teachers need to be aware of the designated works for each context and how they drive the choice of music excerpt used for this question. Many candidates were unable to identify the rhythmic features of this excerpt or lacked awareness that there was evidence of cross rhythm/hemiola in the excerpt, although it is evident in the designated work. While many candidates identified both compositional devices correctly, some provided syncopation as a response which is not a compositional device. The final part of this question required candidates to discuss the effect of the development of the piano on composition, but many struggled to discuss the actual development.

Section Two Cultural and historical analysis: Part B(i) Compulsory area of study

Contemporary Music (22 Marks)

All candidates were able to identify the designated work from which the excerpt was taken but many struggled with the sections of the work that were the focus of this question. Candidates could typically answer questions that did not require any analysis but the question that required candidates to compare the two sections on the score was answered poorly. Responses indicated that candidates did not have a grasp of the basic concepts of harmony, melody and rhythm. For example, when describing melody, most candidates did not discuss range or intervallic structure, preferring to use words such as 'smooth' or 'rough' instead of using appropriate musical language.

Jazz (18 Marks)

Candidates generally answered this question successfully but some responses were too general and required specific information in relation to the era and/or composer.

Western Art Music (24 Marks)

Whilst a designated work, many candidates were unable to answer questions relating to the form of the excerpt provided or the motif. Many candidates were also seemingly unaware that the excerpt contained a cycle of fifths and what was even more concerning, was that they could not identify this harmonic feature on the score provided.

Section Two Cultural and historical analysis: Part B(ii) Non-compulsory area of study

This question was common to all contexts and consisted of two parts. Each part required candidates to provide an extended paragraph response, not an essay-style response. Providing overly-lengthy responses with verbose introductions negatively impacted several candidates with some obviously struggling to manage their time and to complete the examination. Another weakness of candidates was that they often failed to substantiate their comments with supporting references to their designated work/s.

Many candidates struggled with part (a) of this question which required them to compare and contrast two musical features in two of their designated works. Most candidates simply described the musical features in the works but did not compare and contrast them. Some candidates decided to provide more than two elements which did not result in them receiving more marks. In responses to part (b), many candidates discussed the social and political context of their selected designated work but they could not comment on how this influenced musical developments and composers at the time.

Section Three: Theory and composition

Contemporary Music (54 Marks)

In this section candidates had difficulty with the harmonic analysis of Question 10 and the harmonic identification in Question 11. Many candidates struggled to complete their compositions.

Jazz (55 Marks)

Candidates found some aspects of this section challenging, for example in Question 10 they were unable to define terms and symbols and to read the score. The harmonic identification in Question 11 and harmonic progression in Question 12 were weaknesses identified in candidate responses.

Western Art Music (53 Marks)

Aspects of all questions proved to be problematic for candidates, for example in Question 10 a significant number struggled with harmonic writing, in Question 11 they did not recognise the modal tonality of the excerpt but were able to transpose the piece. The harmonisation part in Question 11 was a challenge as the candidates did not recognise the tenor part was in the treble clef.