

Exam Strategy

1. Time allocation for the full composing paper

40 marks for Melody and 60 marks for Harmony

(25 to 30 minutes for Melody and 50 to 55 minutes for Harmony?)

2. Choice of Question

Harmony Section

Q4 Chords given

- add melody
- add bass

Q5 Melody given

- insert chord symbols
- add bass

Q6 Melody given

- insert chord symbols
- add higher melody

Syllabus Requirements (HL)

- Key Signatures
Major & Minor keys up to 4#s & 4bs
- Root Position Chords
Major Keys: I V IV ii vi
Minor Keys: I V VI iv
- First Inversion Chords
Major Keys: Ib Vb IVb iib
Minor Keys: ib Vb ivb iib°
- Dominant 7th & Cadential 6/4 (Ic – V – I)
Stock Progressions only
- Non-Chord Notes

Notation

Roman Numerals

→ Root Positions

Major Chords: I IV V V7

Minor Chords: i ii iv vi

(Diminished Chord: ii° and vii° are not used)

→ Inversions

Ib IVb Vb V7b

ib iib ivb

ii°b is fine

Ic ic

Notation

Backing Chords

→ Chord Symbols

Major Chords: B

Minor Chords: Bm (Bmin)

(Diminished Chord: Bdim – not used)

→ Alternate Bass (Inversions)

C/E Bb/D D7/F#

Am/C Cm/Eb

Bdim/D F#dim/A

C/G Am/E

Essentials

- Key signatures – Major and Minor
- Type of chords in Major and Minor keys
- Distinguish between harmony and non-harmony notes
- Good chord progressions

Minor Keys

1. ii° is not used in Root Position
2. Raise the leading note
3. Avoid 6th to 7th note melodically
[l - t - d - r - m - f - se - l']
4. This affects
 - the Melody and Bass in Q4
 - the Bass in Q5
 - the Melody in Q6

Last year's mistakes (1)

Chord Progressions

- Non-recognition of **cadence points**
- Incorrect use of **V7**
- Incorrect use of **iii** (not on course)
- Incorrect use of **1st inversions**
- Not filling in **boxes above a rest** in melody
- Not using **lower case** Roman numerals for minor chords
- Omitting the **suffix**
- Incorrect use of **2nd inversions**
- Incorrect plotting of chords in the **chord bank**

Last year's mistakes (2)

Melodic Writing

- Lack of melodic **development** (Q4)
- No points of **climax** (Q4)
- Unmusical **bass line** (Q5)
- Poor alignment (Q4, Q5 and Q6)
- Not continuing bass in **given style** (Q5)
- Not avoiding the **augmented 2nd** in a minor melody
*The best notes for approaching / quitting the raised 7th are **l, m and t** (Q4)*
- Omitting the **accidental** when in the minor key (Q4)

Summary for Q5

- Write out the available chords. **Example: Key of C**
C, C/E, C/G, Dm, Dm/F, (Em, Em/G),
F, F/A, G, G/B, G7, G7/B, Am *(12 – 14 chords in all)*
- Write out the good progressions
- Look for cadences
- Use the strongest possible progressions
- Same chord in same position is not allowed in adjacent boxes
- No weird chords
- Watch alignment of bass with treble notes