



Placement Examination for Master's Degree at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music Theoretical Examination – Sample Questions

The following sample questions reflect the level of knowledge in music theory attained at the end of the undergraduate studies in the music performance and musicology tracks at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music. As part of the admission procedure for Master's degree, these theoretical skills (as well as additional skills) will be evaluated in a placement examination according to the specifications provided on the school's Internet site. The purpose of the sample questions below is to help candidates prepare for this placement exam, but the School of Music is not bound to maintain the same format or level of difficulty in the actual exam. Generally speaking, the following sample questions are more extensive than the corresponding sections of the actual placement exam – the idea is to allow candidates prepare for a wide range of questions and possible exam topics. Please scroll to the end of the file for a list of topics and bibliographical references. Please find additional harmonization assignments on P. 9.

I. Formal and harmonic analysis of a sonata form movement

Please find below the first movement of Beethoven's 9th Piano Sonata in E major Op. 14, no. 1. After listening to the piece please answer the following questions:

1. Musical punctuation in the exposition and the structure of the primary theme

- 1a. The movement's primary theme, presented right at the beginning, has an "open" structure, and "dissolves" into the modulatory transition ("bridge"). Up to what point (specify measure number) is the music still in the main key? And beginning at what measure can the harmony be understood as referring to the secondary key?
- 1b. If we identify the entire section up to the modulation as the primary theme section (or "zone"), describe the structure of this theme by identifying the structural principles of sentence ("Satz") or period. List all the elements of this sentence/period (specify measure numbers) that you identify in the primary theme!
- 1c. Identify in the primary theme section *at least* two authentic cadences in the home key (the cadences may be either strong or weak). Specify measure numbers where these cadences are attained and explain which of the two is stronger, to your opinion (there might be harmonic, formal and grammatical reasons to prefer one of the cadences – not all arguments necessarily support the same answer!).
- 1d. Where does the secondary ("subsidiary") theme start (specify measure number)? Directly before the beginning of the secondary theme, Beethoven attains a clear musical punctuation, momentarily interrupting the musical flow. What type of cadence takes place here? Where is it attained and up to where is it extended (specify measure numbers)? To what key does this cadence refer? Can you locate a parallel cadence in the recapitulation? If yes, where (measure numbers)? And in what key?
- 1e. In the exposition section several authentic cadences in the secondary key (B major) can be identified. Such cadences may normally appear at the end of 1) the secondary theme section (or some part of it), 2) the closing theme section (or some part of it) or 3) some codettas directly concluding the exposition. Please identify at least three authentic cadences in the secondary key area of the exposition (specify measure numbers). For each of the cadences, describe what formal section it concludes and explain your choice.

2. Harmonic analysis of modulations in the development section

The development section starts in the home key (E major), due to the fact that the very last measures of the exposition function as a retransition and modulate back to this key (this is not uncommon in Classical sonata movements, although the far more common option is to stay in the secondary key and start the development in this key). Accordingly, a harmonic analysis of the development section is expected to show this underlying relation to the home key, with occasional modulatory moves shown as *tonicizations* in E major, rather than actual replacements of the operative key—analyzing such progressions as tonicizations is possible even where the degree tonicized is not a diatonic one (see analysis of chord no. 12 in the table below). Using the following table, please analyze chords 1-20 using Roman Numerals for harmonic degrees (you may also use common symbols such as K_4^6 or Ger_5^6 where applicable) and indicating inversions and changes of key (if relevant) as well. Some of the chords contain non-chord tones—in such cases, analyze the harmonic degree as you understand it, and then add the non-chord tones (see analysis of chord no. 12). All key changes should be analyzed as tonicizations (using the common format, e.g.: $V^7/_{ii}$), but, if this is easier for you, you may indicate a “veritable” change of key using the space to the left of the dotted line. Analyze the chords located exactly at the points marked by the ellipses—however, you must take into account sustained tones starting at an earlier point in time, as well as arpeggiation figures which should be analyzed as if sounding simultaneously (e.g., in the analysis of chord no. 12 all four sixteenth notes are relevant).

<u>Analysis of harmonic degrees, inversions, tonicizations and non-chord tones in the development</u>				
		⑪	I(E):	①
	$\flat VI$ +passing tone in the melody (f)	⑫		②
		⑬		③
		⑭		④
		⑮		⑤
		⑯		⑥
		⑰		⑦
		⑱		⑧
		⑲		⑨
↓		⑳	↓	⑩

3. Use of the fourth motif in the movement The movement’s main (primary) theme is based on a motif of an ascending fourth interval. Please describe how this motif is presented and what variations/permutations it undergoes in the first four measures of the movement. This motif can be shown to appear throughout the movement, that is, also beyond the main theme. Bring at least four different examples for the occurrences of the ascending fourth motif in the exposition section (but not from the main theme!). Regarding each of these occurrences specify: 1) measure number 2) formal position (the options are: transition between primary and secondary theme, secondary theme, closing theme, codetta) 3) which characteristics remain the same as in the motif’s first appearance at the movement’s beginning and what are the changes/permutations? Possible permutations may include changing the interval’s size and/or direction, rhythmical/metrical changes, changes of dynamics/articulation, filling a leap by steps, etc. Which permutations are most similar and which are least similar to the original motif?

SONATE

Op.14.Nº1.

Der Baronin von Braun gewidmet.

Measure numbers appear at the end of the measure!

Allegro.

9. *p*

5

10

15 *cresc.* *f* *p* *f* *p*

20 *sfz* *f* *p*

25

30 *p* *p*

1) i.e. the turn should be played within the first 8th-beat.

Musical notation for measures 3-5. Measure 3 is marked with *cresc.* and circled 3. Measure 4 is circled 4. Measure 5 is marked with *[fp]* and circled 5.

Musical notation for measures 6-8. Measure 6 is circled 6. Measure 7 is circled 7. Measure 8 is circled 8.

Musical notation for measures 9-11. Measure 9 is marked with *cresc.* and circled 9. Measure 10 is circled 10. Measure 11 is marked with *p* and circled 11.

Musical notation for measures 12-14. Measure 12 is circled 12. Measure 13 is marked with *rinf.* and circled 13. Measure 14 is circled 14.

Musical notation for measures 15-17. Measure 15 is marked with *p* and circled 15. Measure 16 is circled 16. Measure 17 is marked with *pp* and circled 17.

Musical notation for measures 18-20. Measure 18 is circled 18. Measure 19 is marked with *cresc.* and circled 19. Measure 20 is marked with *sf* and circled 20.

First system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains two measures. The first measure has a circled '15' and a 'p' dynamic marking. The second measure has a circled '16'.

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains two measures. The first measure has a circled '85'. The second measure has a circled '16'.

Third system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains two measures. The first measure has a circled '17' and a circled '18'. The second measure has a circled '19' and a circled '20'. The system ends with a circled '90'. Dynamics include 'decresc.' and 'f'.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains two measures. The first measure has a circled '95'. The second measure has a circled '95'. Dynamics include 'p' and 'f'.

Fifth system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains two measures. The first measure has a circled '95'. The second measure has a circled '95'. Dynamics include 'p' and 'f'.

Sixth system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Bass clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains two measures. The first measure has a circled '100'. The second measure has a circled '100'. Dynamics include 'p' and 'f'.

pp *cresc.*

1 3 2 1 3 2 1

5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4 5 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of music. The upper staff begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. It features a melodic line with a trill-like figure and a descending scale. The lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with a descending scale and some chords.

f p p f

3 5 3 4 2 3 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

Detailed description: This system contains the next two staves. The upper staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by piano (*p*) and then forte again. It includes various melodic phrases and trills. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern.

110 p f p

4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth staves. Measure 110 is circled. The upper staff has dynamics of piano (*p*), forte (*f*), and piano (*p*). It features a melodic line with trills and slurs. The lower staff has a consistent eighth-note accompaniment.

115 120

3 4 3 4 5 4 3 4 5 4 3 4 5 4 3 4 5 4 3 4 5

2 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth staves. Measure 115 is circled. The upper staff continues the melodic development with trills and slurs. The lower staff maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

125

p

4 5 1 3 2 1 1 1 2 1 2 1 5

1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth staves. Measure 125 is circled. The upper staff has a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a melodic line with trills. The lower staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment.

130

p

4 2 1 3 1 2 1 3 2 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

1 3 1 2 1 1 2 3 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Detailed description: This system contains the ninth and tenth staves. Measure 130 is circled. The upper staff has a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a melodic line with trills. The lower staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical score system 135-139. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The system contains five measures. Measure 135 is circled. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *f* and *sf*. The bass line features complex rhythmic patterns with fingerings 1-4.

Musical score system 140-144. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains five measures. Measure 140 is circled. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *f*, *sf*, and *p*. The bass line features complex rhythmic patterns with fingerings 1-5.

Musical score system 145-149. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains five measures. Measure 145 is circled. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *cresc.*, *f*, *ff*, *sf*, and *p*. The bass line features complex rhythmic patterns with fingerings 1-5.

Musical score system 150-154. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains five measures. Measure 150 is circled. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *f*, and *sf*. The bass line features complex rhythmic patterns with fingerings 1-5.

Musical score system 155-159. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains five measures. Measure 155 is circled. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *p*, *f*, and *sf*. The bass line features complex rhythmic patterns with fingerings 1-5.

Musical score system 160-164. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. The system contains five measures. Measure 160 is circled. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *decresc.* and *pp*. The bass line features complex rhythmic patterns with fingerings 1-5.

1) Thus in the original Mollo and Simrock editions, recent editions make this analogous to mm 44 & 45, which, however, could not be played on Beethoven's piano.

II. Figured Bass Realization and Harmonization

1. Realize the following figured bass (E-flat major) in four-part-harmony (closed position, 3 parts in the right hand+bass in the left hand). Pay attention to correct voice leading and correct rhythmic notation of the right hand!

Musical score for exercise 1, showing a figured bass line in E-flat major (two flats) and 8/8 time. The bass line consists of eighth notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F114, G114, A114, B114, C115, D115, E115, F115, G115, A115, B115, C116, D116, E116, F116, G116, A116, B116, C117, D117, E117, F117, G117, A117, B117, C118, D118, E118, F118, G118, A118, B118, C119, D119, E119, F119, G119, A119, B119, C120, D120, E120, F120, G120, A120, B120, C121, D121, E121, F121, G121, A121, B121, C122, D122, E122, F122, G122, A122, B122, C123, D123, E123, F123, G123, A123, B123, C124, D124, E124, F124, G124, A124, B124, C125, D125, E125, F125, G125, A125, B125, C126, D126, E126, F126, G126, A126, B126, C127, D127, E127, F127, G127, A127, B127, C128, D128, E128, F128, G128, A128, B128, C129, D129, E129, F129, G129, A129, B129, C130, D130, E130, F130, G130, A130, B130, C131, D131, E131, F131, G131, A131, B131, C132, D132, E132, F132, G132, A132, B132, C133, D133, E133, F133, G133, A133, B133, C134, D134, E134, F134, G134, A134, B134, C135, D135, E135, F135, G135, A135, B135, C136, D136, E136, F136, G136, A136, B136, C137, D137, E137, F137, G137, A137, B137, C138, D138, E138, F138, G138, A138, B138, C139, D139, E139, F139, G139, A139, B139, C140, D140, E140, F140, G140, A140, B140, C141, D141, E141, F141, G141, A141, B141, C142, D142, E142, F142, G142, A142, B142, C143, D143, E143, F143, G143, A143, B143, C144, D144, E144, F144, G144, A144, B144, C145, D145, E145, F145, G145, A145, B145, C146, D146, E146, F146, G146, A146, B146, C147, D147, E147, F147, G147, A147, B147, C148, D148, E148, F148, G148, A148, B148, C149, D149, E149, F149, G149, A149, B149, C150, D150, E150, F150, G150, A150, B150, C151, D151, E151, F151, G151, A151, B151, C152, D152, E152, F152, G152, A152, B152, C153, D153, E153, F153, G153, A153, B153, C154, D154, E154, F154, G154, A154, B154, C155, D155, E155, F155, G155, A155, B155, C156, D156, E156, F156, G156, A156, B156, C157, D157, E157, F157, G157, A157, B157, C158, D158, E158, F158, G158, A158, B158, C159, D159, E159, F159, G159, A159, B159, C160, D160, E160, F160, G160, A160, B160, C161, D161, E161, F161, G161, 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