

# Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for each question of question paper 1 – analysis of media content.

## Candidate 1: The Last of Us

### Question 1(a)

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

In paragraph 1 the feminist audience response is **decoded in detail**.

There are **developed references** to the representations of Tess, Marlene and Ellie as strong, independent females who break gender stereotypes in a way which would appeal to feminist audiences.

There is **developed comment** after the discussion of each character, focusing on the way these powerful female characters will hook the feminist audience and make them want to keep watching the show.

In paragraph 2 the male audience response is **decoded in detail**.

The male audience's responses to the character of Joel are discussed with **developed references** to the way Joel is portrayed as a hero when he is willing to put himself in harm's way to protect Sarah, and also to the violence he is shown to be capable of when someone he cares about is threatened.

There is **developed comment** on how the male audience will respond positively to the way Joel is portrayed and would admire these aspects of his character, which in turn would lead to them wanting to continue watching.

As there are two audiences **decoded in detail** with **developed references** and **developed comment on the references**, the candidate meets all the criteria in the top band and is awarded full marks.

## Question 1(b)

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

In paragraph 1 the horror genre is **decoded in detail**.

There are **developed references** to genre conventions including the fear and chaos causing tension in the scene where Joel and Sarah are trying to escape the infected; the jump scare when a skeleton pops out of the water frightening Ellie; and the unnatural movements, noises and monstrous appearance of the clickers.

There is **developed comment** on a range of audience responses to these genre conventions including the ways female and feminist audiences would respond negatively to the way Sarah fulfils the stereotype of being weak and needing to be saved; the way the male audience would respond well to Joel's actions as hero in the same scene; the audience enjoyment of the thrill of the jump scare; the horror fans' enjoyment of the gore with the clickers; and the feminist responses to Ellie's fear, and Tess's bravery.

In paragraph 2 the post-apocalyptic genre is **decoded in detail**.

There are **developed references** to genre conventions including the harshness of the post-apocalyptic world where a child dying is part of their reality; to Ellie's immunity as a source of hope; and to Tess's sacrifice to save Joel and Ellie.

There is **developed comment** on each of the references including a female audience finding the death of the boy too harsh whilst post-apocalyptic genre fans would enjoy the realism of the scene; feminists enjoying the idea of the female character being the hope for humanity; and feminists responding well to Tess's bravery when she sacrifices herself.

As there are two genres **decoded in detail** with **developed references** and **developed comment on the relationship between genre and audience**, the candidate meets all the criteria in the top band and was awarded full marks.

## Question 3

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

Paragraph 1 is a **developed point of analysis** discussing the way a range of language codes have been used in poster 1 to suggest key information about the central character on the poster and relating this to genre and audience.

Paragraph 2 is a **developed point of analysis** discussing the way costume and facial expression have been used in poster 2 to suggest meanings about the central character on the poster and the situation he is in, with connections to genre and audience.

Paragraph 3 is a **developed point of analysis** discussing the use of colour in poster 1 and how this relates to the representation of the character as a good man, and how this would appeal to male audiences.

Paragraph 4 is a **developed point of analysis** discussing the use of dark colours in poster 2 and relating these colours to darker topics such as death, gore and the horror genre, and how this would appeal to more mature audiences and horror fans.

Paragraph 5 is a **developed point of analysis** discussing the use of mise-en-scene in the background of both posters and relating this to the post-apocalyptic genre. There is **developed comment** on how the two posters show different stages of an apocalypse and how this will appeal to audiences.

As there are **five developed points of analysis** and one paragraph with **developed comment** comparing the posters, the response meets all the criteria in the top band and was awarded full marks.

## Candidate 2: The Last of Us

### Question 1(a)

The candidate was awarded **7 marks**.

In paragraph 1 the gamer audience is **decoded in detail**.

There are **developed references** to the shot-for-shot sequences in episode 1 in the scene with Sarah and Joel sitting together and in the outbreak scene where Joel, Sarah and Tommy try to escape.

There is **comment** on the gamer audience's positive response to these sequences (for example, the comment on the faith it will bring to the gamer audience that the show will stay loyal to the game and the comment that suggests the audience will be happy that the show will adapt the plot directly from the game).

In paragraph 2, the non-gamer audience is **decoded in lesser detail**.

There is **developed reference** to the cold open which introduced important concepts to the audience who are not familiar with the game.

There is **comment** on the audience response to this, suggesting that it gives them sufficient background information on the fungus and that it may help to elicit fear in non-gamers, but the comment is quite vague.

As the gamer audience is **decoded in detail** with **comments** and **developed references**, and the non-gamer audience is **decoded in lesser detail**, the candidate was awarded the lower mark of 7 in the 8-7 band.

### Question 1(b)

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

In paragraph 1, the post-apocalyptic genre is **decoded in some detail**, discussing Joel's character as a conventional lone male protagonist who takes on a protective

father-like role, as well as the conventional theme of 'giving up vs hope' seen in the post-apocalyptic genre.

There are **developed references** to Joel as a typical post-apocalyptic protagonist as exemplified when he protects Ellie's character from the fireflies; and to the theme of 'giving up vs hope' as exemplified through the relationship between Joel, Ellie and Tess.

The candidate makes a brief **comment** at the end of the paragraph about how fans of the post-apocalyptic genre would enjoy seeing these conventions.

At the end of the candidate's response to this question, the narrative convention of a flashback is **explained** but it is not analysed as narrative. There is a link to this appealing to non-gamers as it provides them with more context.

As the post-apocalyptic genre is **decoded in some detail** with **developed references** and brief **comment**, the candidate was awarded the upper mark in the 6-5 band. The candidate would have achieved this mark without the paragraph on flashbacks.

### Question 3

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

Paragraph 1 contains a **point of analysis in some detail** about the codes used in poster 1 which show that nature has reclaimed the abandoned city and that the ruined state of the world is the new equilibrium in the film.

Paragraph 2 contains a **point of analysis in some detail** about codes used in poster 2 which show that the destruction is ongoing, showing the film's disruption of the equilibrium. There is a **link** made at the start of the paragraph commenting on the contrast between the posters in showing different stages of the Todorov Narrative Structure.

Paragraph 3 contains an **explanation** of the representation of the protagonist in poster 1 (there is some repetition from paragraph 1).

Paragraph 4 contains a **point of analysis in lesser detail** about the representation of the protagonist in poster 2. There is a **link** made at the start of the paragraph commenting on the contrast between the representations of the protagonists in both posters.

Paragraph 5 contains a **point of analysis in lesser detail** about the post-apocalyptic genre conventions used in both posters. There is **developed comment** throughout comparing the posters' use of genre conventions.

As the candidate makes two **points of analysis in some detail** and two **points of analysis in lesser detail** and there is **developed comment** comparing the texts in the final paragraph, the upper mark of the 6-5 band was awarded.

## Candidate 3: Promising Young Woman

### Question 1(a)

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

In paragraph 1 (pages 1-3 of the candidate response), the young female audience response is **decoded in lesser detail**. This is exemplified through **relevant references** to the opening scene. **Links** are made to how this audience would respond positively to Cassie's character and the fact she calls out the predatory young man.

In paragraph 2 (pages 4-6 of the candidate response), the male audience is **decoded in lesser detail**.

There are **relevant references** to Ryan's character. **Links** are made to how men may dislike the 'nice guy' trope, the insinuation men cannot take accountability, and the stereotyped behaviour of men in clubs to exemplify this response from the male audience.

In paragraph 3 (pages 6-9 of the candidate response), the feminist audience is **explained**.

The **explanation** is exemplified by **relevant references** to the normalisation of rape culture and the need for systematic change highlighted throughout the film making a link to how feminists would receive such messages positively.

As two audience responses are decoded in **lesser detail**, with **relevant references** throughout **with links** between the content and audience responses, the upper mark in the 6-5 band was awarded.

### Question 1(b)

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**.

Across this response, categories is **explained** through **relevant references** to conventions of the romance and thriller genres.

In paragraphs 1-2, the romance genre convention of the 'meet cute' is **explained** with **relevant reference** to Cassie and Ryan meeting.

In paragraph 3, the romance genre convention of the 'perfect partner' is **explained**. This is exemplified with **relevant reference** to the film's depiction of Cassie and Ryan's relationship and to Cassie discovering this was false.

Paragraph 4 **explains** the thriller vigilante trope. This is exemplified through **relevant references** to Cassie's revenge schemes to gain justice for Nina.

There are **no links** made between categories and audience across the response.

As each use of **categories** is briefly **explained**, exemplified with **relevant references** to the film, but no links are made to **audience**, the lower mark in the 4-3 band was awarded.

### Question 3

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**.

In paragraph 1, the candidate **identifies** the use of famous actors to attract audiences and makes **some relevant references**. There is a **link** made about the similarity of the uses of stars in each poster.

In paragraph 2, the candidate gives an **explanation** of how each poster creates the action genre, with **some relevant references** to the settings. There is a **link** made about how each poster does this.

In paragraph 3, the candidate gives an **explanation** of how the use of colour creates the action genre with **relevant references**, and again makes a **link** between how each poster does this.

Paragraph 4 contains an **identification** of the potential target audience of the films, supported by some **relevant references** to the use of Will Smith and Brad Pitt, and makes a further **link** to the similarity between the posters.

In paragraph 5, the candidate **identifies** how the layout and character placement draw viewers' attention and again makes a **link** between the posters.

As the candidate **explains** two points, and the other points are **identification**, the lower mark in the 4-3 band was awarded.

## Candidate 4: Get Out

### Question 2(a)

The candidate was awarded **4 marks**.

In paragraphs 1 and 3 the representation of white people as being racist and deceitful are taken together to be one point of analysis **decoded in lesser detail**. There are **relevant references** to Dean's cultural appropriation and his attempts to appear non-racist and to Rose standing up to the police officer's racial profiling of Chris with a **link** to how they are both putting on a facade to cover up their racist ideologies.

In paragraph 2 the representation of the police as racist is **explained**. There is **relevant reference** to the scene where Rod goes to the police but no analysis of how this scene helps to construct the representation of the police as racist.

As one representation is **explained** and the other is **decoded in lesser detail**, the upper mark in the 4-3 band was awarded.

### Question 2(b)

The candidate was awarded **4 marks**.

In paragraph 1 the institutional factor of budget is **explained**. There is **relevant reference** to the way the budget allowed for filming in Alabama, with a **link** to how the location of the Armitage house helps to construct the representation of white people as covering up their racism.

In paragraph 2 the institutional factor of the casting of Rose's character is **explained**. There is a brief **relevant reference** to the unexpected nature of Rose's character given Alison Williams' previous roles, and a **link** to the representation of white people as hiding their racism behind a façade.

As there are two institutional factors **explained** with some **links** to representation, the upper mark in the 4-3 band was awarded.

### Question 3

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

Paragraph 1 is a **point of analysis in some detail** on the representation of the main characters on both posters, with a **comment** on how both characters embody traditional male gender roles despite some difference in their appearance on the posters.

Paragraph 2 is a **developed point of analysis** on the dystopian genre in poster 1. There are references to the mise-en-scene in the poster and to the tagline, and the candidate draws these together to reflect on how these codes combine to anchor the genre and appeal to the target audience.

Paragraph 3 (beginning 'However, in poster 2 ...') is a **point of analysis in lesser detail** on the action genre in poster 2. There are references to mise-en-scene and colour, and a **link** is made to poster 1 at the start of the paragraph.

Paragraph 4 is a **point of analysis in lesser detail** on the narrative in both posters. The candidate discusses how both characters embody different Propp character functions and there is a **link** between the posters ('in contrast to this ...').

Paragraph 5 **identifies** the stars of the films, but there is no analysis.

Paragraph 6 **explains** society factors and makes a **link** between both posters in terms of how they both embody fears of war and destruction.

As there is one **developed point of analysis**, one in **some detail**, and two in **lesser detail**, and there are **links** and one **comment** comparing the posters, the upper mark in the 6-5 band was awarded.

## Candidate 5: Get Out

### Question 2(a)

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

In paragraph 1, the representation of African American people as weak and vulnerable is **decoded in some detail**.

There is **developed reference** to the scene where Chris is racially profiled by the police officer and Rose steps in to prevent it. The candidate **comments** on the way this constructs the representation of Chris as weak and vulnerable.

There is also a **relevant reference** to the opening scene where Dre is alone at night in a white suburb. The candidate **comments** on how Dre's discomfort in this scene is a reversal of a stereotype. This adds to the representation of African Americans as weak and vulnerable.

In paragraph 2, the representation of white Americans as racist is **decoded in lesser detail** through the discussion of Chris's treatment at the Armitage family gathering.

There are **relevant references** to three examples of micro aggressions which are **linked** to the representation, without comment.

As the representation of African Americans is **decoded in some detail with comment**, the upper mark in the 6-5 band was awarded.

### Question 2(b)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

In paragraph 1, the **institutional factor** of budget is **decoded in lesser detail**.

The institutional factor of Blumhouse's low budget leading to the use of the single location to keep filming costs down is discussed, and there is a **link** made between the location and **representations**. There are **relevant references** to the Armitages'

wealthy lifestyle, and to Chris's vulnerability when he is trapped in their house, and these are **linked** to the representations discussed in part (a).

In paragraph 2, the **institutional factor** of casting is **decoded in lesser detail**.

The casting of the three main characters is discussed, outlining what the actors bring to the film based on their previous roles. The candidate **links** the casting of these actors to **representations**, using **relevant references** including Dean's representation as a nice person and an Obama fan linked to his role in the West Wing; Rose's previous typecasting as an innocent character linked to the shock created by the reveal of her representation as a cruel white racist, one of many that could be hidden amongst us; and Chris's being played by an actor unfamiliar to US audiences is linked to his representation as a relatable everyman.

As both budget and location are nearer to explanation and can only just be described as being **decoded in lesser detail**, the lower mark in the 6-5 band was awarded.

## Candidate 6: Do the Right Thing

### Question 2(a)

The candidate was awarded **8 marks**.

In paragraph 1, the representation of Tina as a woman is **decoded in some detail**.

There are **developed references** showing how she both challenges and conforms to the stereotype of being a woman. The candidate discusses the way Tina's character challenges the stereotype in the opening when the audience see her complete a boxing session but then conforms to the stereotype throughout the rest of the film through her relationship with Mookie.

There is **comment** on the way this constructs Tina as being active in fighting against power, thereby challenging the stereotype of women, and there is also **comment** on how her representation ultimately conforms to the stereotype of women living for men as seen through her relationship with Mookie and subsequent lack of involvement in action after the opening scene.

In paragraph 2 the representation of Radio Raheem as a black man who is proud of his identity is **decoded in some detail**.

There are **developed references** to the film to show how this representation is constructed, showing him as proud of his culture and fighting oppression without violence. For example, it is mentioned that Radio Raheem shows his pride in his culture in the scene in which music is used as a form of protest, and there is discussion of how his character is used to challenge the stereotype of black men as violent in the scene in which he is killed at the hands of the police who assume him to be violent.

There is **comment** on the construction of Radio Raheem as a positive representation of black people, taking pride in his culture and fighting oppression with love rather than violence.

As the representations of both Tina and Radio Raheem are **decoded in some detail with developed references and comment**, the candidate was awarded the upper mark in the 8-7 band.

## Question 2(b)

The candidate was awarded **4 marks**.

In paragraph 1, the society factor of police brutality is **identified**.

There is a **link** to the representation of the police in the pizzeria scene and the way they handle the peaceful protest by Radio Raheem. The candidate makes a reference to the scene with the white man's car, but this isn't related to police brutality which is the named societal factor.

The society factor of institutional racism is **identified**.

In paragraph 2, the society factor of gentrification is **explained**.

There is a **link** to the representation of Clifton as a white resident in a black neighbourhood. There is further **explanation** of gentrification at the end of the paragraph, **linked** to the representation of Clifton and his status as a white property owner.

As two society factors are **identified** and the third is **explained**, and there are **links** to representations, the upper mark in the 4-3 band was awarded.