Commentary on candidate evidence:

Candidate 1 - Bond

Q1a: Society

The candidate was awarded **8 marks.**

This is an integrated response. Two society contexts are decoded in detail: terrorism and gender roles, and these are discussed with developed references to James Bond films. Comment is made on the relationship between each society context and the Bond films. These comments are detailed, but not insightful, so 8 marks are awarded.

The society context of terrorism is decoded in detail. There is particular reference to the 9/11 attacks and their impact on the world – creating a sense of paranoia etc. There are specific examples from the content, particularly in Casino Royale and Bond's heroic action in stopping a plane being blown up. Comment is made upon the relationship between this example and the society factor, specifically how seeing Bond save the day suggests that the world is becoming better equipped at dealing with terrorist attacks.

The society context of gender roles is also decoded in detail, with specific reference to the changing societal ideas about the role of women. There is clear reference to the representations of female characters such as Bond girls and M in both Dr No and Casino Royale, and characters like Miranda Frost in Die Another Day and Vesper in Casino Royal. There is comment on how these representations reflect changing societal ideas about gender, such as how women nowadays can be seen in more powerful or complex roles.

Candidate 2 - Children of Men

Q1a: Society

The candidate was awarded **9 marks.**

The society context of the post 9/11 distrust of Blair and Bush in 2006 is decoded in detail. Particular reference is made to left-wing disenfranchisement at the time and there is discussion of how this can be seen reflected in the dystopian setting of Children of Men. There is specific exemplification from the film with reference to distrust of government, and comment is made on the way in which this is being shown as a possible future, which has been inspired by the contemporary society context of the film.

The society context of the controversy surrounding the US military's treatment of prisoners of war at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay is decoded in detail, with specific discussion of the human rights outrages and subsequent animosity towards the US government. There is then discussion of how this is reflected in the Bexhill sequence in Children of Men. There are developed references to details from the sequence which are used to exemplify how the film reflects the society context. There is insightful comment on the referenced content and how it reflects the issues surrounding Guantanamo Bay and the US government's treatment of prisoners of war and immigrants.

The society context of mass immigration and how this was being reported on in the press at the time is also decoded in detail, with discussion of the negative stance being taken towards immigrants by some media outlets. The candidate then discusses how this society context can be seen reflected in the film by giving developed references to the use of mise-en-scène and discussing how these are used to connote the extreme poverty in which the immigrants in the film are living. There is comment at the end of the response which connects this representation of immigrants in the film to the society context.

Candidate 3 - The Force Awakens

Q1a: Society

The candidate was awarded **8 marks.**

Two society contexts are decoded in detail: the rise of third wave feminism and its subsequent influence on societal attitudes towards women in film; and the changing attitudes towards males, and specifically fathers, in society. Comment is made on the relationship between each society context and the film. These comments are detailed rather than insightful.

The society context of feminism and attitudes towards women is decoded in detail. There is discussion of the shift in roles being given to female rather than male characters as a result of society no longer being satisfied with traditional representations of women as objects of desire or sidekicks. There are specific examples from The Force Awakens, discussing for example how Rey defies stereotypes by being intelligent and talented, and how Leia is now in a position of power. Comment is made on these examples to connect them to the society factors. There is further discussion of the portrayal of Leia, with the suggestion that her relationship to her estranged son and husband is a reflection of society's critical attitude towards women who work instead of staying at home.

The society factor of the changing attitudes towards males and fathers in society is decoded in detail. In particular, there is reference to how males are no longer seen as dominant, and how absent fathers are increasingly common in modern society. There are examples from the content to exemplify the idea that men are no longer seen as dominant, all-powerful and perfect, specifically looking at the characters of Kylo Ren, Hans Solo and Finn. Comment is made upon the relationship of each society factor and the specific examples from the film.

Candidate 4 -Thelma and Louise

Q1a: Society

The candidate was awarded **8 marks.**

The society context of feminism is discussed in relation to the traditional gender roles still present in the early 1990s, and third wave feminism. There are clear examples of how this context is reflected in the film, with the characters fulfilling traditional gender roles at the start of the film, and then later challenging these gender roles through their actions. Comment is made to connect these examples to the society context. The society context of the American relationship with guns is also discussed, with particular detail about the legalities of gun ownership and the NRA stance on the issue. There is further discussion of gender politics around guns. There is clear exemplification from the film, specifically how the gun is seen as a symbol in the film and how Thelma and Louise change their attitudes towards the gun. There is comment on how these examples reflect the society context of the American relationship with guns.

Q1b: Representations + Society

The candidate was awarded **7 marks.**

Representations of the female and male characters are decoded in some detail with clear examples from the film. There is a link between the examples and the society context of gender roles. There is also a more basic link to the ideas of third wave feminism and gender politics around guns. There is a discussion of how the representation of the women changes as the film progresses. They become less passive and more comfortable around guns, with detailed exemplification from the rape scene. There are some brief comments about how this connects to the society contexts of third wave feminism and attitudes to guns. There is a discussion of how the women are represented as strong at the end of the film with some comments relating the symbolism of the guns to the female characters' empowerment

Q1c: Other Key Aspect(s) of Content + Society

The candidate was awarded **5 marks.**

Todorov's narrative structure is decoded in some detail, with clear examples from each stage of the narrative. Examples include seeing Thelma as a housewife and Louise as a waitress in the equilibrium stage, and the disruptions of their decision to go on the run, and the subsequent theft of their money. There are some straightforward links to the society factors of feminism and attitudes to guns made in relation to some of the stages of Todorov's narrative.

Candidate 5 - Mad Max: Fury Road

Q1a: Society

The candidate was awarded **6 marks.**

The society contexts of patriarchal leadership, objectification of women and women fighting back against this are exemplified through detailed references to Mad Max: Fury Road. The predominance of male leadership in contemporary society is discussed in some detail with clear links to the film, specifically to Immortal Joe's leadership. The society factor of the objectification of women is linked to the portrayal of Joe's wives as his property. The society factor of women beginning to 'smash the patriarchy' is also discussed with links to the character of Furiosa. Whilst there are clear links between the referenced society factors and detailed evidence from the film, none of these are developed into comment.

Q1b: Representations + Society

The candidate was awarded **7 marks.**

The representations of men and women in the film are decoded in some detail and there is comment on the way that these representations are influenced by the society contexts discussed in 1a. There is discussion of the negative representations of Joe and his Warboys, with exemplification of their treatment of women, and comment on how this connects to the society factor of the objectification of women. This society context is further discussed in relation to the negative representation of the subservient wives in the film. The representation of Furiosa as a powerful female leader is decoded in some detail with comment on the connection to the rise of strong female figures such as Mhairi Black, demonstrating an understanding of the shift in values in contemporary society's attitudes to women.

Q1c: Other Key Aspect(s) of Content + Society

The candidate was awarded **6 marks.**

Several concepts are decoded in lesser detail. The response makes straightforward points about the wives' costumes and chastity belts linking to the objectification of women, and about Furiosa's make-up showing power. There is also a point made about Furiosa fulfilling Propp's character role of hero rather than princess, with a link to progression in the representation of women. There is also reference to Levi-Strauss' theory of binary oppositions which is linked to the society context of feminism versus patriarchy. The discussion of the society factors is stronger than the decoding of the examples of language and narrative from the film.

Candidate 6 - The Matrix

Q1a: Society

The candidate was awarded **7 marks.**

The society factor of the fear of technology in the late 1990s is discussed in some detail. There is reference to the 'millennium bug', although this isn't decoded in any detail. The response continues with a more detailed discussion of a generalised fear of technology. There are comments made about how this fear is reflected in specific examples from The Matrix. The response discusses examples of how technology is shown as threatening in the film such as the 'search engines' threatening Neo, and the dark and gritty tone used to show the 'real world' where the machines are in power. There is comment on how these examples reflect society's fear of how powerful technology could become. The rise in popularity and use of videogames in the culture of the late 1990s is also discussed in some detail, with specific and detailed references to the film. There is a link made between the dojo scene and platform games, but this is not developed into comment.

Q1b: Representations + Society

The candidate was awarded **7 marks.**

The representations of Trinity, Neo and Morpheus are decoded in some detail and there is some comment on how these representations reflect society factors. The society factors discussed in part 1b are not the same as those discussed in 1a, but this is still credited. The representation of Trinity as a powerful woman is exemplified and linked to female empowerment at the time. The construction of Neo as a non-traditional hero is decoded in some detail but the link to society is underdeveloped. The construction of the character of Morpheus is decoded in some detail and discussed in relation to casting a black actor in the role. There is comment on the way in which the representation of the character as powerful and knowledgeable was possible due to society's growing acceptance of racial diversity at that time.

Q1c: Other Key Aspect(s) of Content + Society

The candidate was awarded **5 marks.**

Language codes and genre are decoded in some detail. There is a link made between Trinity's costume and female empowerment but this is not developed into comment. The discussion of the use of guns is simplistic and, although the cultural code of green is decoded in some detail, the link to society is basic. The use of the kung-fu genre is discussed in some detail but it is not linked to a relevant society factor.