

# Commentary on candidate evidence

## Candidate 1

### Portfolio-writing: Olly Murs

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** for this broadly discursive piece of writing.

#### Summary

This is a broadly discursive piece of writing in which the candidate sets out to inform the reader about the life and career of Olly Murs.

#### Content

In this piece, the attention to purpose and audience is reasonably well sustained.

There is some evidence of research, and the candidate begins by providing some general background detail about Olly Murs' family and early life:

'Olly Murs was born 14 May 1984 with his twin brother Ben in Witham, Essex.'  
(paragraph 1)

The information is relevant and is presented in a clear sequence with paragraph 2 focusing on his estrangement from his twin brother. In paragraph 3, the candidate moves on to provide the reader with information about Olly Murs' wife, Amelia, and their life together:

'She trains multiple times a week – often with Olly – and posts updates across social media.'  
(paragraph 3)

In paragraph 4, the focus changes to Olly Murs' career and provides a number of details about his music, again showing evidence of some research:

'His second studio album debuted at number one in the UK and resulted in two number one single "Heart Skips a Beat" and "Dance with me Tonight".' (paragraph 4)

In paragraph 5, the candidate traces Murs' transition from musician to TV presenter. As is the case throughout the piece, the candidate employs a chronological line of thought.

In the concluding paragraph, the candidate references forthcoming tour dates and ends with an apposite quote from Murs.

## Style

The features of the genre are deployed with a degree of success. The candidate provides reasonably detailed information about Olly Murs' family and career.

Language is effective in the main, for example 'In 2010 Olly Murs released his self-title debut studio album' (paragraph 4). But, at times, it lacks variety, with a tendency to simply list information (paragraph 4).

The structure of the piece is appropriate to the meaning as the candidate moves through the different phases of Murs' life. The piece does contain errors in sentence structure, but these don't impede the communication of meaning.

## Overall

Overall, the candidate's attention to purpose and audience is reasonably well sustained. Throughout the piece, the candidate provides evidence of relevant research and, whilst language occasionally lacks variety and contains errors in sentence construction, it is effective in the main, communicating key ideas clearly.

This piece of writing is mostly described by statements from the 9-7 range, although there is some suggestion of the 6-4 range in the lack of language variety and errors in sentence construction. Therefore, the piece is placed at the lower end of the 9-7 range and is awarded 7 marks.

# Candidate 2

## Portfolio–writing: New York

The candidate was awarded **9 marks** for this broadly creative piece of writing.

### Summary

This is a broadly creative piece of personal writing in which the candidate gives an account of a trip to New York.

### Content

Attention to purpose and audience is reasonably well sustained, exploring the candidate's thoughts and feelings about their holiday in New York. The candidate explores experiences and feelings with, at points, a good degree of sensitivity and involvement.

The piece opens with a comparison between New York and Dundee which is effective in setting the scene. The candidate's appreciation of the differences between the two cities is clear but the main focus is centred on their excitement at visiting the Spiderman movie locations, culminating in their encounter with 'someone dressed up as Spiderman' which was a highlight. The candidate reflects:

'I knew it wasn't the real Spiderman, but it still felt like it was.' (paragraph 1)

Paragraphs 2 and 3 focus on the accommodation and food the candidate enjoyed, with some sense of involvement coming across:

'The beds were also very comfy; they were comfier than the bed I have at home.'  
(paragraph 2)

Paragraph 4 moves on to the sightseeing the candidate did on their holiday, commenting on the Empire State building and, in paragraph 5, the World Trade Centre. A sense of involvement is, again, apparent:

‘Once we got to the top, it felt amazing to look over the whole city from the second highest point in the city.’ (paragraph 4)

The piece concludes with the flight home and the candidate’s reflection that, ‘I learned so much new stuff.’ (paragraph 6)

## Style

The features of the chosen genre are deployed with a degree of success.

Language is effective in the main and is at times apposite and used to create an effect. For example, in paragraph 1, the candidate says, in reference to meeting Spiderman, ‘it really felt like my life was complete.’ In paragraph 4, the candidate makes the effective observation that ‘the noise of the lift was like an old typewriter.’

The candidate’s description of the fire truck in the World Trade Centre Museum as being ‘charred from being engulfed in flames’ (paragraph 5) is another example of the candidate’s effective use of language.

The structure of the piece is appropriate to meaning and purpose, as the candidate takes a chronological approach to the account of the holiday.

## Overall

Overall, the candidate’s attention to purpose is reasonably well sustained. There is some creativity with feelings and experiences explored with a sense of involvement (from the 9-7 mark range). At points, it could be said that there is a good degree of involvement (from the 12-10 range). Language is effective in the main and, on a few occasions, is apposite and used at times to create an effect. The structure of the piece is appropriate to purpose and meaning. In summary, the piece can be described by all the indicators from the 9-7 mark range with a few indications of the 12-10 range. As such, the piece is placed at the upper end of the 9-7 range of marks and is awarded 9 marks.

## Candidate 3

### Portfolio-writing: Should Horror Movies Really Be Remade?

The candidate was awarded **12 marks** for this broadly discursive piece of writing.

#### Summary

This is a broadly discursive piece in which the candidate examines the effectiveness of classic horror films being remade using modern techniques.

#### Content

In this piece, attention to its persuasive, discursive purpose is consistent.

In paragraph 1 the candidate outlines the purpose of their essay, 'whether old classic horror movies should be remade' (paragraph 1), listing various relevant issues, for example:

'...the impact of modern tech and the difficulty of capturing the right story telling.'  
(paragraph 1)

Attention to purpose is maintained in the second paragraph where the candidate puts forward the opinion that 'Old slashers tend to have a special legacy within the fans heart'. The candidate develops this point by saying that remakes lose much of their original appeal:

'...the originals have a special place within us and are cherished not only for the plot but for the intense and unique atmosphere it had, which a remake might struggle to capture and replicate.' (paragraph 2)

In paragraph 3 the candidate examines the viewpoint of modern-day audiences who expect 'more thrill, intensity and storytelling.' Objectivity is apparent when the

candidate concedes that modern films make use of contemporary thinking and technology, before asserting that the original strengths are in danger of being diluted:

‘Modern filmmakers often stray towards the modern trends instead of capturing the original essence and core elements.’ (paragraph 3)

In paragraph 4 the candidate considers the range of technology available to current film makers, while evaluating the overuse of both ‘visual scares/ jump scares’ and concluding that this can detract from ‘the emotional impact that made the original so memorable.’

In the paragraph 5 the candidate discusses the importance of plot and its effect on the remakes in light of modern trends, feeling that ‘modern filmmakers struggle to capture the originals story and essence’.

In the final paragraph the candidate again displays objectivity in stating that the question of remakes is ‘complicated and multifaced’ (paragraph 6). The candidate concludes that ‘classic legacy horror films should be left alone’ (paragraph 6).

## Style

The features of the chosen genre are deployed, mostly successfully. The candidate makes good use, for example, of the rule of three:

‘Today’s fan base often seeks more thrill, intensity and storytelling.’ (paragraph 3).

There are attempts to engage readers by offering personal opinions, using the first-person pronoun:

‘For many horror fans such as I, the originals have a special place within us...’ (paragraph 2)

Language is apposite and used at times to create particular effects, for example:

‘Lastly, the challenge of storytelling cannot be overlooked or undermined.’ (paragraph 5)

Apposite language is again apparent in that the vocabulary is subject specific, with accurate references to such features of filmmaking as: 'CGI/special effects, sound capturing and design, and the filmmaking/cinematography...' (paragraph 4).

The candidate makes use of forceful, persuasive language at times, for example: 'Horror reaches its highest potential and is found most effective when it taps into someone's psychological fears rather than relying only on the visual scares/jump scares.' (paragraph 4).

The structure of the piece supports its purpose. Each paragraph introduces a relevant point as outlined in the candidate's introduction and develops the original topic sentence. The conclusion successfully draws the essay to a close, finding that: '...classic legacy films should be left alone...' (paragraph 6).

## Overall

Overall, the candidate's attention to purpose and audience is consistent (from the 15-13 range). The candidate makes four main points which are all relevant to the discussion around the remaking of old horror films. Whilst there are no acknowledged sources, the candidate uses their extensive subject knowledge as the basis of their debate and, indeed, this only serves to strengthen their argument which is presented in a clear sequence (12-10 range). The features of the chosen genre are deployed, mostly successfully (12-10 range). The language is apposite, being used at times to create an effect (12-10 range).

This piece can be described by all the indicators of the 12-10 range. Its consistent attention to purpose and audience and its persuasive line of thought, which are indications of the 15-13 range, mean that it is awarded 12 marks.

## Candidate 4

### Portfolio–writing: I’ll Tell You About The Magic

The candidate was awarded **15 marks** for this broadly creative piece of writing.

#### Summary

This is a broadly creative piece in which the candidate reflects on time spent with their grandmother.

#### Content

In this piece, attention to purpose and audience is consistent. In paragraphs 1 and 2 the candidate explores the importance of music and the emotions and memories it triggers associated with her granny. Very good creativity can be seen in:

‘I am immediately reminded of her and the magic she conjures.’ (paragraph 1)

In paragraph 3 the candidate displays a very good sense of self-awareness and insight when discussing how the relationship with the granny has helped them develop. This is demonstrated with the phrases: ‘I know which qualities I wish to nurture for myself’ and ‘I would be proud to emulate her.’ (paragraph 3)

In paragraphs 5 and 6 the candidate reflects on her granny’s background and the importance of the role of telepathy in the relationship she had with her own grandmother. The candidate uses anecdotes to recount the life and fascinating character of the granny. Again, the candidate shows insight in comments such as: ‘developed a bond with her grandmother’, ‘a mystical relationship’. (paragraph 5)

In paragraph 7 the candidate explores the positive role of telepathy in their granny’s life, and makes the sensitive observation:

‘...she felt comforted by the message, and this became an emotional safety buffer protecting her throughout life.’

The candidate goes on in paragraph 8 to explore the different positive emotions associated with visits to the granny's home and does so with a very good sense of involvement. The candidate notes a 'tangible feeling of comfort' and being 'enchanted'.

In paragraph 10, the candidate concludes the piece, acknowledging their 'unconditional love and affection' for the granny and the qualities she embodies – 'captivating' and 'full of magic.'

## Style

The structure adopted by the candidate enhances the purpose and meaning. For example, the idea of the granny as a 'magical' presence in the candidate's life is an effective motif that runs throughout the piece. The piece opens with a quote from the song 'Do You Believe in Magic' and continues in the opening paragraph with reference to the 'magic she conjures'. This is developed with word choice such as 'sorcery' (paragraph 6), 'enchanted' (paragraph 8), 'charmed' (paragraph 8) and 'spellbound' (paragraph 8). Here the language is clearly used to create a particular effect.

The cyclical structure of the piece enhances the reflective nature of the writing. The piece takes us on a journey of the relationship between the candidate and the granny. It begins by reflecting on the relationship with granny, offers anecdotal accounts of the closeness of the two grandmothers and ends with the candidate's desire to encapsulate the qualities of the granny in her own character. The candidate closes the piece with: 'My wish is to be magical like her.' (paragraph 10)

The candidate effectively deploys features of the genre of personal writing when reflecting on the importance of the relationship. For example, in paragraph 3 the candidate writes 'I would be proud to emulate her' and in paragraph 9 writes 'she inspires me and always exceeds my expectations.'

## Overall

Overall, this piece can be described by all the indicators of the 15-13 range. The attention to purpose is consistent and the piece displays very good creativity. There is both self-awareness and insight in the exploration and development of the relationship between the candidate and granny. It is consistent in both creative content and style. The structure of the piece is very effective in supporting the candidate's reflections. These factors place the piece at the upper end of the mark range. It is therefore awarded 15 marks.