

6720-21 Level 2 Technical Award in Constructing and Maintaining the Built Environment

Qualification Report 2022

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Foreword

Results August 2022

As you will likely be aware, Ofqual has announced that grading for General Qualifications this summer will be more generous than prior to the pandemic. This is partly due to managing the impact of disruption and learning loss on learner performance and also managing fairness between learners in different years who had different methods of determining their grades. Therefore, for A levels and GCSEs, grading will seek a midway position between 2019 and 2021, meaning, in general, results will be somewhat higher than prior to the pandemic. This year, 2022, is a transitional year and outcomes and standards will likely return to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.

Similarly, for Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs), this summer will be a transitional year and Ofqual has now been clear that for VTQs “we should expect that this summer’s results will look different, despite exams and assessments taking a big step towards normality.” Ofqual has published a blog [What’s behind this summer’s VTQ results](#).

In acknowledgement of the disruption to learning and to support fairness for all learners certificating this summer (some of whom will be competing against learners taking General Qualifications for the same progression and higher education opportunities), we will be taking loss of learning into consideration, whilst still acknowledging the need to uphold the validity of the qualifications. On this basis, we have made the decision to apply a form of ‘safety net’ through some additional ‘generosity’ to both the theory examinations and synoptic assignments within our Technical Qualifications wherever appropriate, (noting that it may not be appropriate to apply where there is a clear impact on knowledge and skills to practice, particularly health and safety requirements or other relevant legislation). We are therefore also reviewing candidate work a few marks below (equivalent to 5% of maximum marks) the Pass and Distinction notional boundaries – the boundaries used during the awarding process as the best representation of maintaining the performance standard from 2019.

The reason for lowering boundaries, where appropriate, by 5% of the maximum marks available, is that it is broadly commensurate with the level of generosity learners are likely to see in General Qualifications at level 2 and level 3. Providing that senior examiners can support the quality of learners’ work seen below the notional boundaries and agree it is sufficient to maintain the integrity, meaning and credibility of the qualifications, the grade boundaries will be lowered across the full set of grades – e.g Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction Star. Given the circumstances, this is the best approach to take into account the disruption to teaching and learning across every learner in a fair and transparent way, and at the same time maintain the integrity and meaning of qualifications. This approach helps to level our Technical Qualifications awarding approach with that adopted for General Qualifications and other qualifications awarded in England and in the wider UK.

Spring examination series 2022

Having taken this decision, we are also mindful of learners who have taken components in **Spring 2022** and believe they should also have access to the same level of generosity. For these learners, we wish to adopt a similar approach. Therefore, for learners taking Technical Qualification assessments in spring there will be similar generosity, through the addition of 5% of the maximum mark available for the assessment. It is a different mechanism to that we are using for the summer assessments but provides the same level of generosity to those learners taking assessments in the summer.

Introduction

This document has been prepared by the Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator; it is designed to be used as a feedback tool for centres in order to enhance teaching and preparation for assessment. It is advised that this document is referred to when planning delivery and when preparing candidates for City & Guilds Technical assessments.

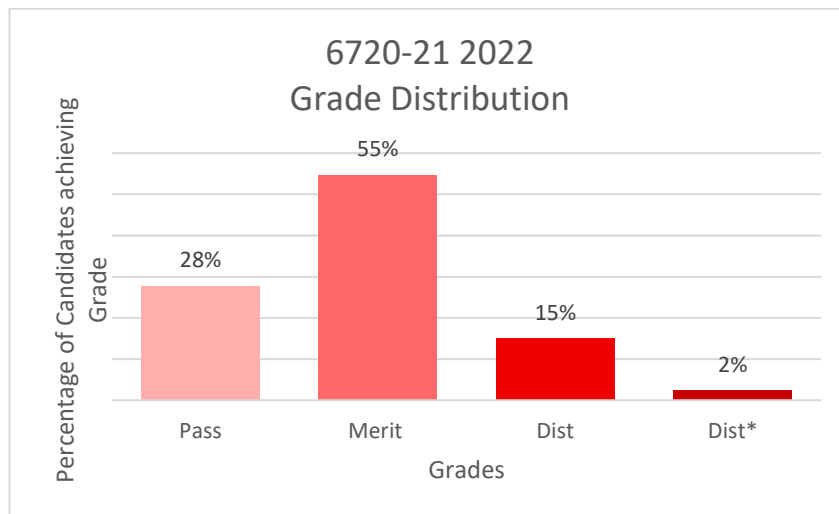
This report provides general commentary on candidate performance in both the synoptic assignment and theory exam. It highlights common themes in relation to the technical aspects explored within the assessment, giving areas of strengths and weakness demonstrated by the cohort of candidates who sat assessments in the 2022 academic year. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose.

The document provides commentary on the following assessments:

- 6720-002/502 Level 2 Technical Award in Constructing and Maintaining the Built Environment – Theory exam
 - March 2022 (Spring)
 - June 2022 (Summer)
- 6720-001 Level 2 Technical Award in Constructing and Maintaining the Built Environment – Synoptic Assignment

Qualification Grade Distribution

The approximate grade distribution for this qualification is shown below:



This data is based on the distribution as of 22 August 2022.

Please note City & Guilds will only report qualification grades for candidates who have achieved all of the required assessment components, including Employer Involvement, optional units and any other centre assessed components as indicated within the Qualification Handbook. The grade distribution shown above could include performance from previous years.

Theory Exam

Grade Boundaries (For Spring examinations)

Boundary Table

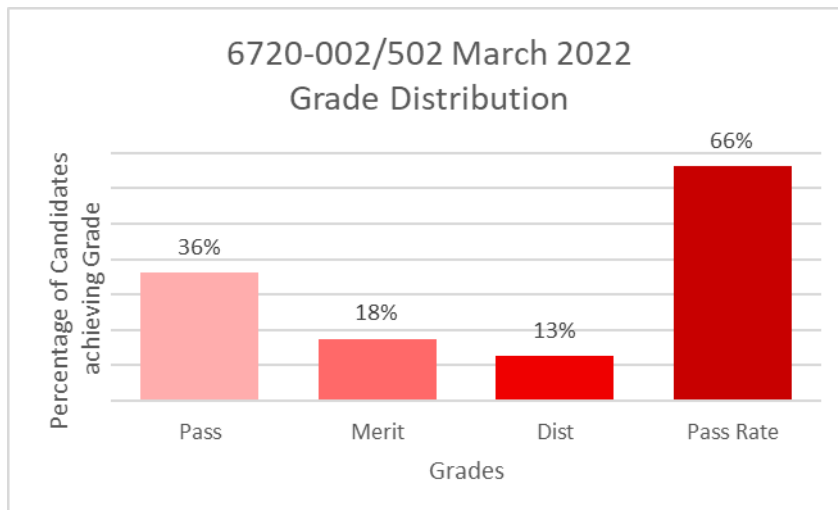
Assessment: 6720-002/502
Series: March 2022 (Spring)

Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment, as agreed by the awarding panel:

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	23
Merit mark	31
Distinction mark	39

The generosity applied to the summer assessments will also retrospectively be applied to candidates who achieved their best result in spring. 5% of the base mark of the assessment will be added to their score rather than applied to boundaries.

The graph below shows the approximate distributions of grades and pass rate for this assessment, it does not account for any marks that have been amended due to generosity:



Grade Boundaries (For Summer examinations)

Boundary Table

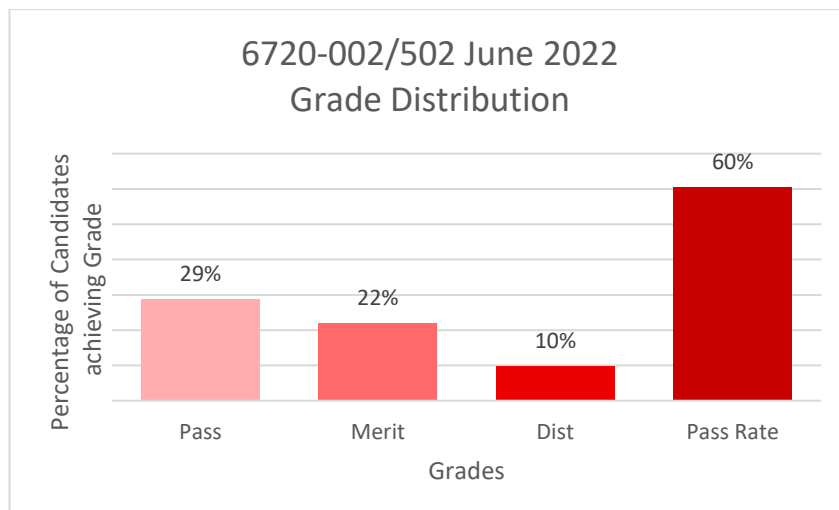
Assessment: 6720-002/502

Series: June 2022 (Summer)

Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment,

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	20
Merit mark	28
Distinction mark	36

The graph below shows the approximate distributions of grades and pass rate for this assessment using the above boundary marks:



Chief Examiner Commentary

Level 2 Technical Award in Constructing and Maintaining the Built Environment - Theory exam

Series 1 – March 2022

The paper covered the syllabus well and at the appropriate level. Candidates were able to demonstrate simple recall of fact and knowledge, more so than demonstrating any real depth or breadth of understanding. Overall, candidates' performance was stronger in the recall questions but there was a general trend of inaccuracy when using technical terms. The cohort performed broadly the same as the previous series.

Topics that were answered well included the question on the purposes of a Gantt chart in construction projects, although some candidates did not give explanations. Many candidates also showed sufficient knowledge in identifying the tasks carried out in carpentry. The question on the advantages of planned building maintenance was also answered well with most candidates providing reasonable descriptions. Many candidates also demonstrated a good knowledge of the safety PPE used by carpenters. There were also good responses to the extended response question, specifically the factors to be considered in advance of a house extension project, whilst some gave poor attempts. Higher scoring candidates were able to give linked responses to the scenario with decent references to these factors.

Areas of weakness included topics that required a good level of built environment technical and financial understanding. The question on why domestic properties are not usually finished with an external render did not demonstrate much built environment technical understanding. For the question on the specific industry term, 'building obsolescence', explanations were very poor and showed a poor grasp of the term. Similarly, for the question on painting and decorating trade practices, responses showed a poor grasp of knowledge of the trade, as did the question on the professional roles within CDM regulations with legal duties. The question on the purpose and impact on site works of a method statement again was not answered well, showing limited depth and understanding, with many candidates simply giving bullet points.

Centres are encouraged to help students further develop their knowledge and understanding of Constructing and Maintaining the Built Environment processes and practices. They need also to understand the importance of reading and dealing with the detail of each question and teach examination technique. Centres are advised to make use of learning opportunities in building design, planning, construction and surveying practice through industry site visits, case studies and class participation in a simulated construction business competition running throughout the teaching year as a formative assessment strategy.

Series 2 – June 2022

The paper covered the syllabus well and at the appropriate level. However, candidates have not engaged with this examination as well as previous series. Questions were well structured, ensuring that a range of questions were asked from across the broad specification, with the use of language supporting candidates at an appropriate level. This specific examination window is often used by centres and candidates to re-sit if an unsuccessful outcome was achieved in the March 2022 series.

Topics that were answered well included recall questions on the tools and materials required for constructions works when considering the role of a bricklayer constructing a garden wall. Candidates also performed well with both AO1 and AO2 questions relating to onsite safety and application, where Toolbox Talks and Risk Assessments had been assessed. However, a small but significant number of lower band candidates explained the purpose of a Toolbox Talks as 'to check on items needed for a toolbox prior to work'. Most candidates were able to recall the purpose of a risk assessment, but they struggled to explain how a risk assessment achieves its purpose.

Broadly, candidates struggled when responding to questions based on building services. For example, almost all candidates failing to recall correct depths that services would be located (question 5). Furthermore, candidates were unable to identify building services works. Often, candidates would mention the role of an electrician or plumber, highlighting the need for candidates to read questions fully.

In previous examination series, candidates have usually achieved some marks when questioned on construction drawings. However, in this examination, candidates broadly struggled to identify one feature or piece of information that could be found on a site layout. Only a handful of higher band candidates were able to correctly recall four features.

Centres are advised to ensure that candidates have the basic knowledge on drawings and information that can be found within them prior to candidates being put forward for examinations. Candidates generally struggled to offer correct responses when being asked for the advantages in application of constructions works or materials. The specific advantages of a material such as ceramic tiles over vinyl, the use of plastic as a standard choice for guttering or the construction of a raft foundation, generally could not be explained by candidates without the use of a generic response being offered.

Candidates were unable to gain more than one or two marks for the higher scoring AO2 questions, showing little confidence in both recall and breadth of knowledge. The language used by candidates here was far too generic and generally, candidates struggled to demonstrate coherent use and application of construction terminology. This was evident in question 10 on the benefits of off-site prefabrication and question 14 relating to building maintenance schemes, where many candidates only achieved lower marks of 3 and 4 mark questions.

With regards to the extended response question, most candidates tended to score marks in the upper first and lower second mark band, which is consistent with the poor knowledge and understanding demonstrated throughout the paper. Lower band responses showed little distinction between the needs of refurbishment and demolition and offered a lack of depth when explaining the needs of the project. In some cases, candidates provided basic lists which identified roles within the sector required. However, little context was given as to why this was needed or how trades would be utilised or mapped to the scenario. Higher attaining candidates could often relate back to the scenario, using effective terminology to demonstrate understanding and often showed wider depth in knowledge assessing the impact of regulations and planning. Centres should ensure that candidates provide or show evidence of a plan within their response.

There were a significant number of candidates using generic responses to answer questions without formal reasoning being offered or applied as part of the response – this point has been raised in previous examination series to centres. However, there has been little improvement in candidate responses.

Based on the performance of candidates, it is clear that many were either out of practice with examinations (due to COVID lockdowns) or had been insufficiently prepared to sit this assessment. It is best practice to ensure that candidates are fully prepared prior to entry for examinations. Centres may, for example, consider mock assessments as preparation for candidates, using downloadable past papers from the City & Guilds website. Candidates require sufficient tuition that will support the range of knowledge required to meet the full breadth of the specification. Moreover, centres are advised that poor responses to questions often fell when a candidate failed to read questions fully, prior to offering a response. There have been a small number of papers where the candidate has failed to provide any response to a question, and some papers where candidates had failed to respond to half of the questions. Furthermore, a small but significant number of candidates offered the incorrect number of responses to a question, often when asked to recall knowledge. Again, this could be improved with greater training and preparation.

Synoptic Assignment

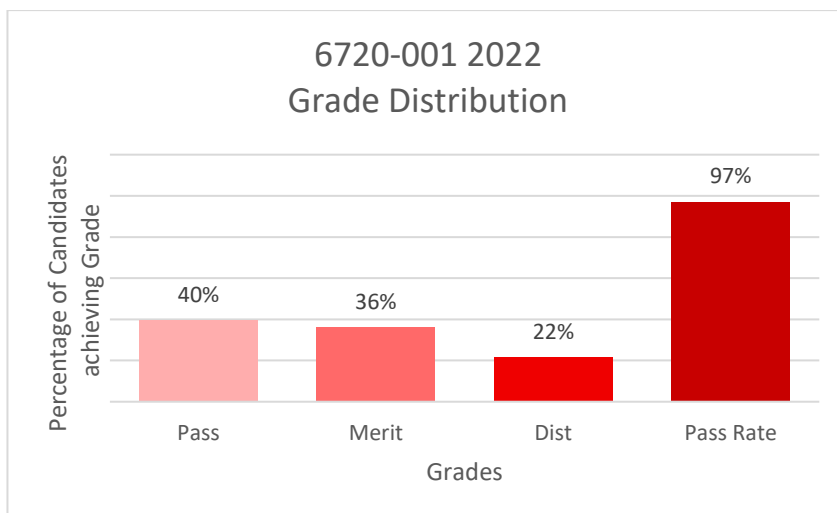
Grade Boundaries

Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment, as agreed by the awarding panel:

Assessment: 6720-001
Series: 2022

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	24
Merit mark	32
Distinction mark	41

The graph below shows the approximate distributions of grades and pass rate for this assessment, using the above boundary marks:



Principal Moderator Commentary

This assignment had a good variety of tasks and lent itself to active learning which gives teachers the opportunity to make lessons fun and interesting. The tasks encouraged the development of a variety of skills. The knowledge required to complete the tasks were all purposeful, realistic tasks that technicians in the industry would carry out. Tutors in nearly all of the centres used the marking grids well to support their marking and signpost where they value candidates work. They are using the holistic approach to marking well with only a few marks across all centres being out of tolerance when moderated.

AO1 Recall of knowledge - All of the tasks in the assignment offered candidates the opportunity to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge from the teaching of this qualification. The candidates that attained higher marks were able to work through the tasks in a logical manner using the information required to complete the tasks in a way that demonstrated that the teaching has had an impact on the way they have approached the tasks. Recall of knowledge generally was good across all candidates.

AO2 Understanding - Candidates provided satisfactory explanations of the principles that underpinned their knowledge and demonstrated understanding of the main concepts and themes across the industry. Candidates achieving higher marks showed a breadth and depth in their understanding and this was evidenced across all tasks. For example, the labour schedules considered a full range of job roles (both trade and / technical professional) and had realistic time frames with overlapping themes. The risk assessments clearly showed the purpose and the difference made by the impact of implementing the control measures and in the outstanding assignments, there was a clear use of alpha numeric recording systems. Presentations and sketches were clear and logical and there were clear links between the concepts they were proposing. These were illustrated with more detail and care.

AO3 Application of practical/technical skills – There was a good range of activities for candidates to choose from to make their training more enjoyable and personalised towards their own needs and interests. The tasks were challenging and designed to develop skills at an appropriate level to encourage progression. They also provided good opportunities to make links between theory and practice. Centres used the PO sheets well to describe the candidate's performance and provided a good insight into their marking and where they saw the value in candidates' performance. Centres provided good photographic evidence to support the claims for the grades awarded. The practical element of this qualification continues to provide good opportunities for candidates to consider a range of opportunities in terms of progression to further and higher levels of study and into careers in the industry.

AO4 Bringing it all together - The assignment gave a number of opportunities to demonstrate that candidates were bringing their work together in an appropriate way. Most candidates were able to draw conclusions based on the evidence available and make connections between tasks and theory, although some lacked depth of detail. The candidates with the higher marks were able to make good use of neat sketches, an important skill in the professional and technical areas. These were used to articulate the candidate's knowledge precisely with attention to detail that showed that they linked their ideas to context. Centres showed that they can link the AOs in their holistic approach to their marking.

AO5 Attending to detail - Candidates were able to demonstrate a range of checks throughout the assignment and for each of the tasks. Candidates with the higher marks were meticulous in these checks, tasks were completed fully and their work was presented in a professional manner and, at times, to industry standards and expectations.