0171-002/502– Level 3 in Agriculture – Theory Exam (1)

March 2023

Examiner Report

Contents

Introduction

This document has been prepared by the Chief Examiner, it is designed to be used as a feedback tool for centres to use in order to enhance teaching and preparation for assessment. It is advised that this document be referred to when preparing to teach and then again when candidates are preparing to sit examinations for City & Guilds Technical qualifications.

This report provides general commentary on candidate performance and 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 the **March 2023** examination series. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose, whether it was caused by a lack of knowledge, incorrect examination technique or responses that failed to demonstrate the required depth of understanding.

The document provides commentary on the following assessment;
0171-002/502 Level 3 in Agriculture – Theory Exam.

Theory Exam – March 2023
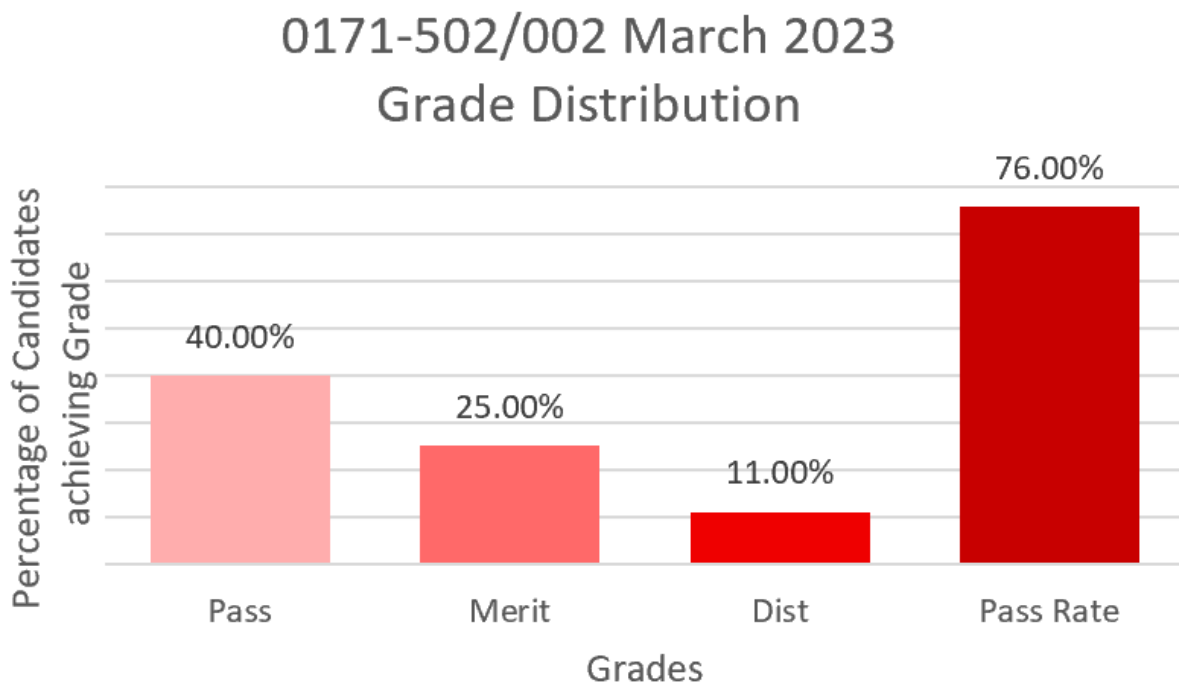
Grade Boundaries and distribution

Assessment: **0171-002/502**
Series: **March 2023**

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

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	24
Merit mark	33
Distinction mark	42

The graph below shows the approximate distribution of grades and pass rates for this assessment:

0171-502/002 March 2023
Grade Distribution

Chief Examiner Commentary

General Comments on Candidate Performance

Assessment component: 0171-002/502

Series 1 (March)

The question paper was generally balanced and covered a good level of knowledge and understanding from across the qualification. Questions were answered with a varying degree of accuracy and depth, and overall candidates' performance on the paper was comparable to last year.

Candidates demonstrated a weakness across recall of knowledge, struggling on the AO1 questions which including sheep breeds, live outputs from a pig herd and perennial crops.

AO2 questions responses were varied across the cohort. The candidates who achieved higher marks were able to demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge, backed up by relevant examples and including explanation and justification where needed. Lower achieving candidates tended to give brief and listed answers. There was evidence of candidates not fully reading questions, which meant they missed out on marks by not responding in the way needed or providing the level of detail required to access the full range of marks available at AO2. Candidates did not always engage with the command verbs, for example simply stating rather than explaining, this meant that candidates did not always provide enough detail when asked for explanations or descriptions.

Candidates need to be reminded to take care and read the questions carefully, particularly the command words where a named example or a specific number of points may need to be covered.

Overall, candidates showed strength in:

- Unblocking balers (Unit 303)
- Crop rotation (Unit 304)

Candidates require further support in:

- Sheep breeds and live outputs for a pig herd (Unit 307)
- Soil organic matter (Unit 305)
- Functions of plant structures (Unit 305)

Extended Response Question (ERQ)
The extended answer question gives candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their grasp of the qualification and knowledge of agriculture in general. Candidates were asked to discuss the considerations for the crop and soil management for a crop of forage maize to be grown on a heavy soil. There were some well-developed answers with some excellent use of examples and some higher-level candidates were able to discuss a range of considerations. However, many candidates demonstrated a limited understanding of the key topics with mainly descriptive comments.

Answers in the main lacked detail and structure with limited use of technical language.
It is advisable that candidates take time to plan their answers to help them to fully answer the question.

Centres are reminded of the City & Guilds Technicals 'Exam Guides' available here:

[Technicals in Agriculture and Land-based Engineering qualifications and training courses | City & Guilds (cityandguilds.com)](cityandguilds.com)

Candidates are strongly advised to be familiar with the command verbs they may encounter during examinations and to be prepared for the different types of structures of questions, as well as the need to read each question carefully and to respond clearly to the question given in the depth required.