

0174-21 Level 2 Technical Certificate in Forestry and Arboriculture

2022

Qualification Report

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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.

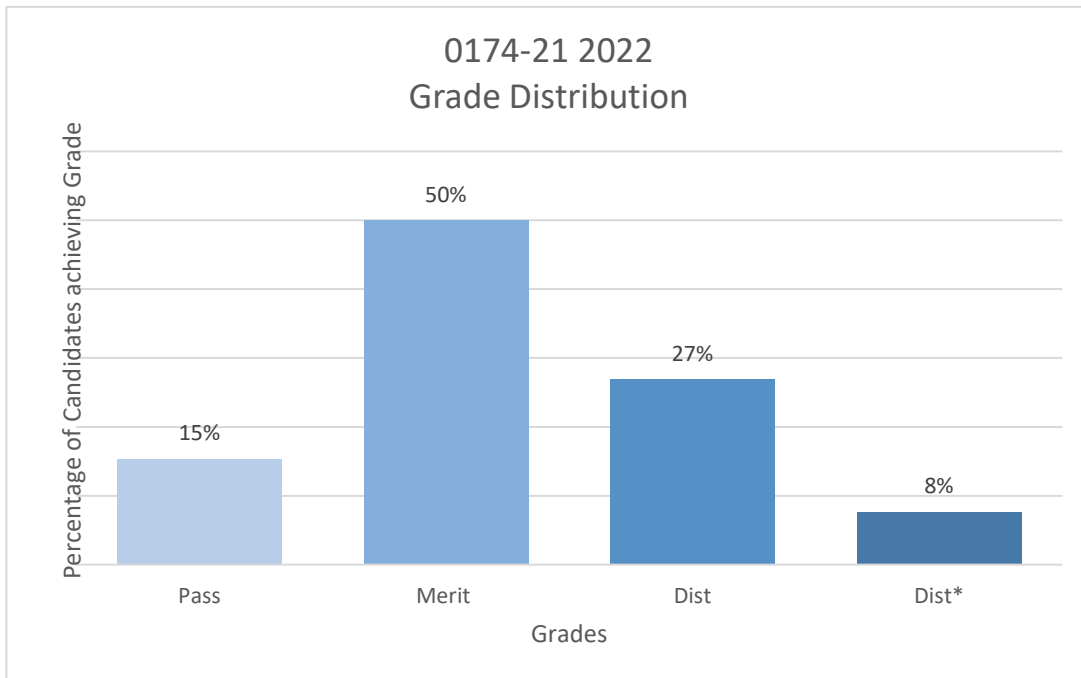
This report provides general commentary on candidate performance in both the synoptic assignment and theory exam. It highlights common themes in relation to the technical aspects explored within the assessment, giving areas of strengths and weakness demonstrated by the cohort of candidates who sat assessments 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:

- 0174-523 Level 2 Forestry and Arboriculture – Theory exam
 - March 2022 (Spring)
 - June 2022 (Summer)
- 0174-022 Level 2 Forestry and Arboriculture – Synoptic Assignment

Qualification Grade Distribution

The approximate grade distribution for this qualification is shown below:



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

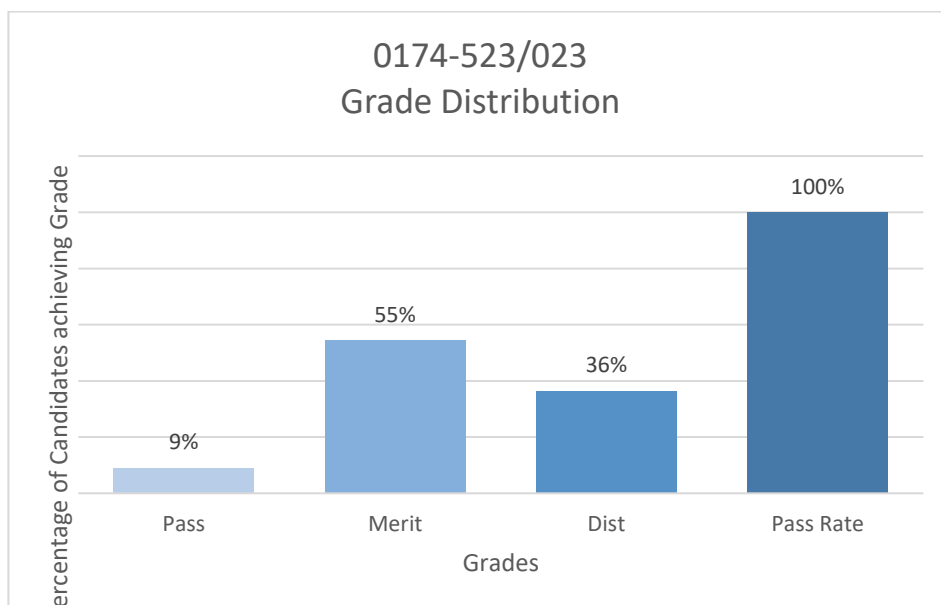
Assessment: 0174-523/023
Series: March 2022 (Spring)

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

Total marks available	40
Pass mark	17
Merit mark	23
Distinction mark	29

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:



General Comments on Candidate Performance

Assessment component: 0174-523/023

Series 1 (March 2022)

In comparison with the March 2020 series, overall candidate performance in the March 2022 paper was reduced, with a smaller percentage of candidates gaining distinction and a higher percentage gaining a pass, whilst the percentage of candidates gaining a merit showed a slight increase. The paper was comparable with the March 2020 series paper, being well structured, written at the appropriate level and testing a range of abilities.

Although there were no distinct areas where most candidates performed particularly well, areas where limited knowledge and understanding were shown included Unit 206 Tree Establishment; in particular questions relating to planting and protection of establishing trees. Candidates also struggled across all the units being tested where the focus of questions related more to the forestry sector than arboriculture.

Questions requiring candidates to apply knowledge and understanding in an integrated way provided some positive differentiation between the low and high performing candidates, as would be expected for these types of questions. Some candidates appeared not to have referred to the scenario for context when attempting these integrated questions so did not gain marks as a consequence. Centres are encouraged to support to candidates in developing exam technique.

Centres are reminded of the City and Guilds Technicals 'exam Guides' available here

https://www.cityandguilds.com/-/media/productdocuments/land_based_services/animal_management/0172/0172_level_2/animal_care/assessment_materials/0172-021_technicals_exam_document_2018_v1-pdf.ashx

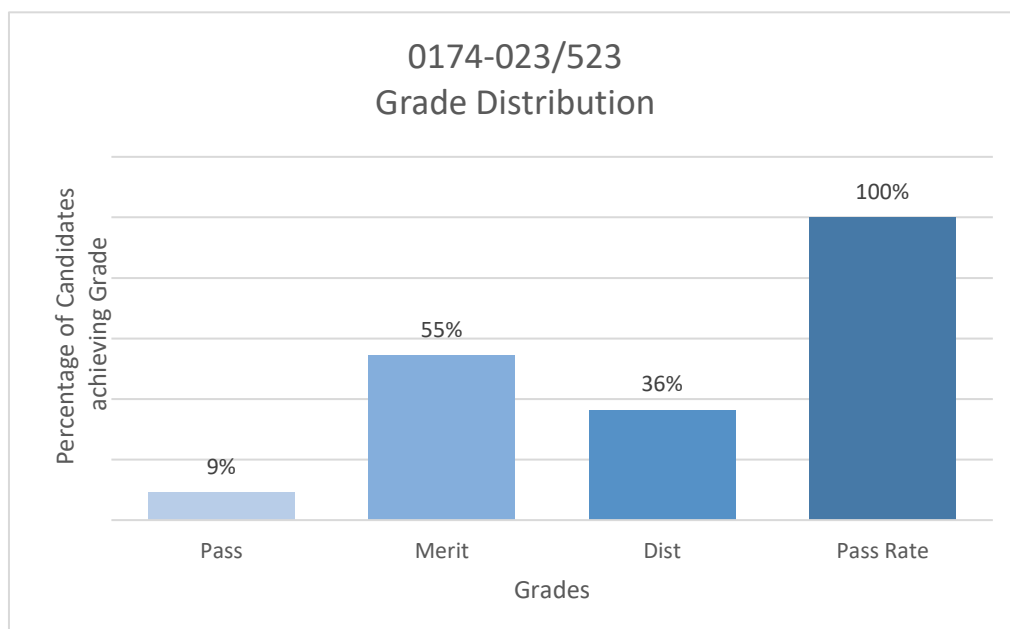
Grade Boundaries table

Assessment: 0174-523/023
Series: June 2022 (Summer)

Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment.

Total marks available	40
Pass mark	15
Merit mark	21
Distinction mark	27

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



Chief Examiner Commentary

0174-523/023 Level 2 Forestry and Arboriculture - Theory exam

Series 2 June 2022

The June 2022 series paper was compared with March 2020 and March 2022 papers. It was considered to be very similar in terms of content and level of difficulty, and, although some differences in format were noted between questions in the March 2020 paper and those in the March 2022 and June 2022 series, the overall level of difficulty / accessibility was judged to be the same.

Overall candidate achievement was lower than in March 2022, with candidates struggling to answer A02 and A04 questions correctly. As there were very few entries for this series, it is difficult to draw strong conclusions regarding pattern of candidate performance across the units being tested but it was judged to be very similar to that of the March 2022 series i.e. limited knowledge and understanding of Unit 206 Tree Establishment; in particular questions relating to planting and protection of establishing trees. Candidates also struggled across all the units being tested where the focus of questions related more to the forestry sector than arboriculture.

Centres are reminded of the City and Guilds Technicals 'exam Guides' available here

https://www.cityandguilds.com/-/media/productdocuments/land_based_services/animal_management/0172/0172_level_2/animal_care/assessment_materials/0172-021_technicals_exam_document_2018_v1-pdf.ashx

Synoptic Assignment

Grade Boundaries

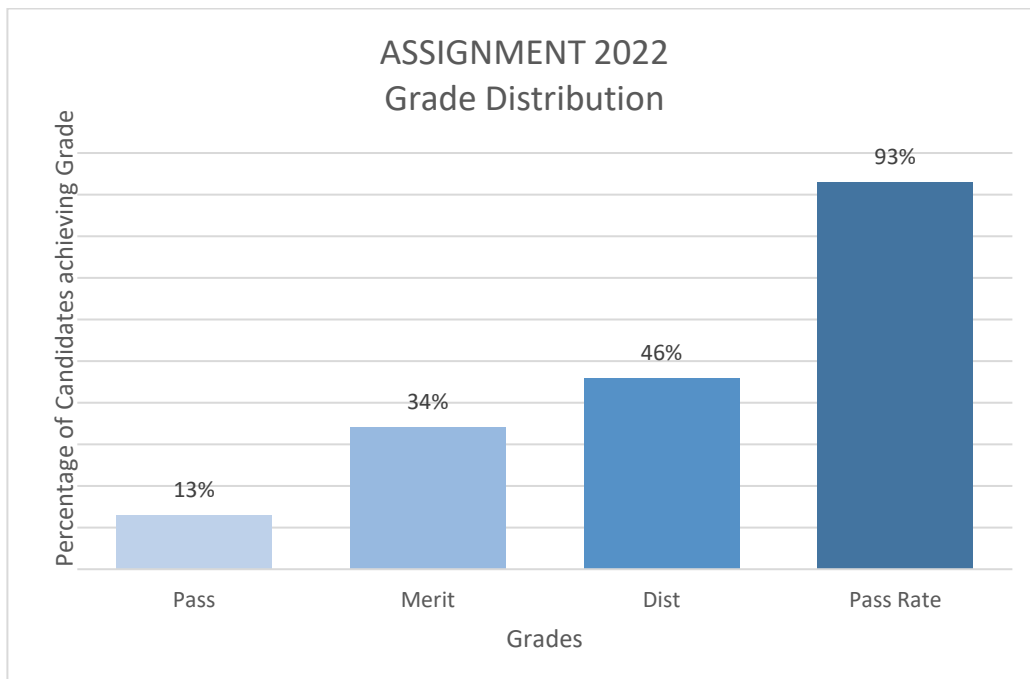
Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment, as agreed by the awarding panel:

Assessment: 0174-022

Series: 2022

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	20
Merit mark	28
Distinction mark	37

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



Principal Moderator Commentary

Comments on centre administration

Moderators noted that administration for most centres was good with occasional pieces of evidence missing and instances of declarations not being correctly completed when uploaded to the portal. Missing evidence however was quickly rectified by these centres.

For future uploading of evidence, it is recommended that centres who are not already doing so use a single PDF document instead of multiple individual folders.

Overall performance of candidates compared to expectations

Compared with 2018 and 2019 (pre-covid) series a similar pattern of performance was noted, with strong overall performance.

Evidence from each candidate mostly met expectations across an expected range of ability, though a number of candidates performed very poorly and did not appear to have been adequately prepared for the challenge of a L2 synoptic.

Provision of evidence for moderation

Practical observation forms were used by tutors with varying degrees of success. Some observers are still not providing an adequate narrative to support judgements on practical performance, though others provided very strong, detailed observations. Some observers stated what the candidates did but did not qualify the performance by saying how or why the performance was good or very good.

CRFs were generally completed clearly and comprehensively but some markers need to provide more in depth narrative with closer linkage with the terminology used in the marking grid.

Performance against Assessment Outcomes (AOs)

AO1 Recall of knowledge related to the qualification LOs

A range of written recall knowledge was available through Task 1a site survey, which was then used to inform Task 1b production of 1b a plan and sketch map, and Task 2a (risk assessment) while verbal recall was demonstrated through comments made on the POF within the practical assessments for Task 2b. This allowed candidates to demonstrate knowledge and recall by selecting appropriate tools and equipment and by choosing suitable methods and practises for the ground-based tree management activity risk assessed in Task 2a.

AO2 Understanding of concepts theories and processes relating to the LOs

Candidate evidence varied for this outcome with some candidates recording very little information on site survey forms for Task 1a, so Task 1b reports were lacking in content; however stronger candidates recorded a wide variety of relevant information during site survey and so were able to produce strong content in the written report. Those candidates operating at the lower of the bands within the marking grid made a few straight forward links and gave simple explanations whereas those at the upper end of the marking band showed greater understanding, consolidation and application of holistic knowledge.

In the risk assessment task, although a pro-forma template had been provided, not all candidates completed all of the sections within the template, suggesting a poor understanding of risk assessment requirements, but stronger candidates demonstrated very good understanding within this task.

AO3 Application of practical/technical skills

The majority of candidates performed well as noted within PO forms. There was an expected range of abilities between candidates, but few were highlighted as fluid or practiced, indicating that they were not well experienced in the activity they were undertaking.

Most centres chose not to submit photographic evidence but where photographs were provided, they added little to the quality of evidence provided by the marker. Photographs (where supplied) **must** be accompanied by adequate annotation, captions or direct links within the marker notes to explain what the photograph is showing and how that provides evidence for assessed outcomes. Without narrative or captions it is difficult for moderators to assess the value of the photos against prescribed assessment outcomes. Going forward centres need to address this issue if they intend submitting photographs as evidence of performance against outcomes.

AO4 Bringing it all together- coherence of the whole subject

Task 1 provided the best opportunity for AO4 as it gave the candidates a wide range of site considerations, features, feasibility and practical implications to explore and report upon in the context of improving overall biodiversity within the woodland.

AO5 Attending to detail/perfecting

Markers noted that higher-level learners were able to continually check and correct during practical activities. This AO was generally marked correctly by centres. In Task 2b (ground – based tree management activity) attention to detail was generally evidenced by tutor narrative on POFs referring to the quality of finish and adjustments made to working techniques in response to changing conditions or unforeseen problems.

Candidates provided valuable evidence for this outcome in their survey field notes (Task 1a) and associated report (Task 1b) and within the Task 2a risk assessment.