0174-21 Level 2 Technical Certificate in Forestry and Arboriculture

2023

Qualification Report

Contents

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 2023 academic year. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose.

The document provides commentary on the following assessments:

- 0174-523/023 Level 2 Forestry and Arboriculture – Theory exam
  - March 2023 (Spring)
  - June 2023 (Summer)
- 0174-022 Level 2 Forestry and Arboriculture – Synoptic Assignment

Qualification Grade Distribution

The approximate grade distribution for this qualification is shown below:

POS 2023 Grade Distribution

Percentage of Candidates achieving Grade

- Pass: 11%
- Merit: 51%
- Dist: 34%
- Dist*: 5%
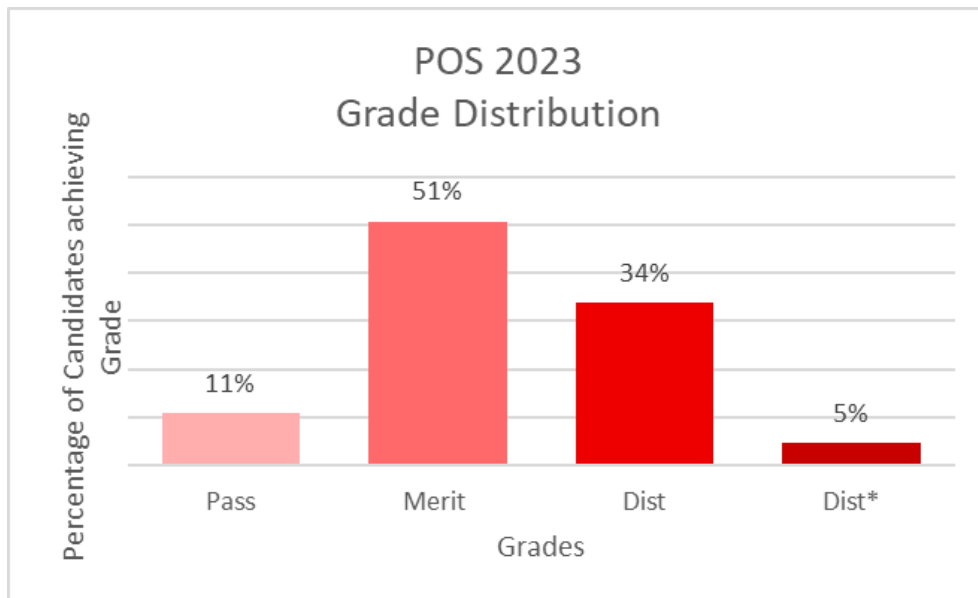
Grades

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.
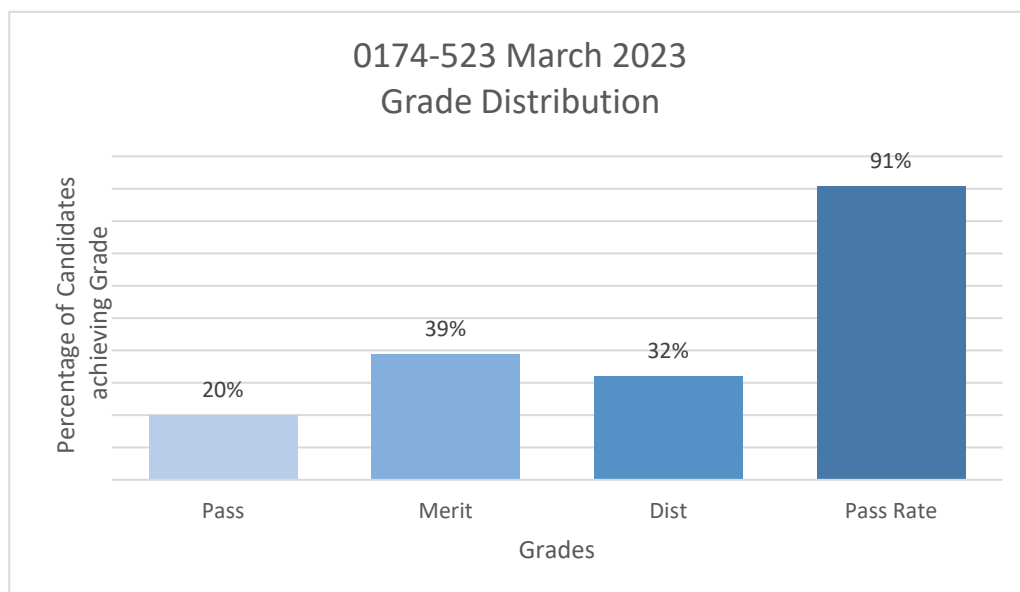
Theory Exam

Grade Boundaries

Assessment: 0174-523
Series: March 2023 (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 graph below shows the approximate distribution of grades and pass rates for this assessment:

0174-523 March 2023
Grade Distribution

General Comments on Candidate Performance

0174-523 Level 2 Forestry and Arboriculture - Theory exam

Series 1 (March 2023)

Overall achievement for the March 2023 paper was very similar to that of March 2022; however, it has been noted that higher percentage of candidates have gained distinction, with a slight increase in candidates gaining merit and a corresponding decrease in the number of candidates gaining a pass.

The paper was comparable with the March 2022 series paper, being well structured, written at the appropriate level and testing a range of abilities.

Overall, the cohort has performed well on questions relating to the following topics: job applications and interview progression, control measures to manage pollution, biosecurity in Forestry and Arboriculture, plant parts and their functions, influence on plant growth, actions to improve soil properties, tree protection, understanding the tree selection process for specific sites and understanding aftercare requirements for trees.

Although knowledge and understanding were shown across the curriculum, weaker performance was noted in questions relating to some topics within units 205 Introduction to Plant Science and 206 Tree Establishment, in particular relating to plant physiology and nursery stock. As is the case every year, candidates performed less well across all units where the focus of questions related more to forestry 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 and, as a consequence, did not gain marks. This was particularly noted where the scenario related to a forest management company establishing a particular crop on a relatively large area, with answers chosen by some of the candidates were not reflecting this scenario.

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
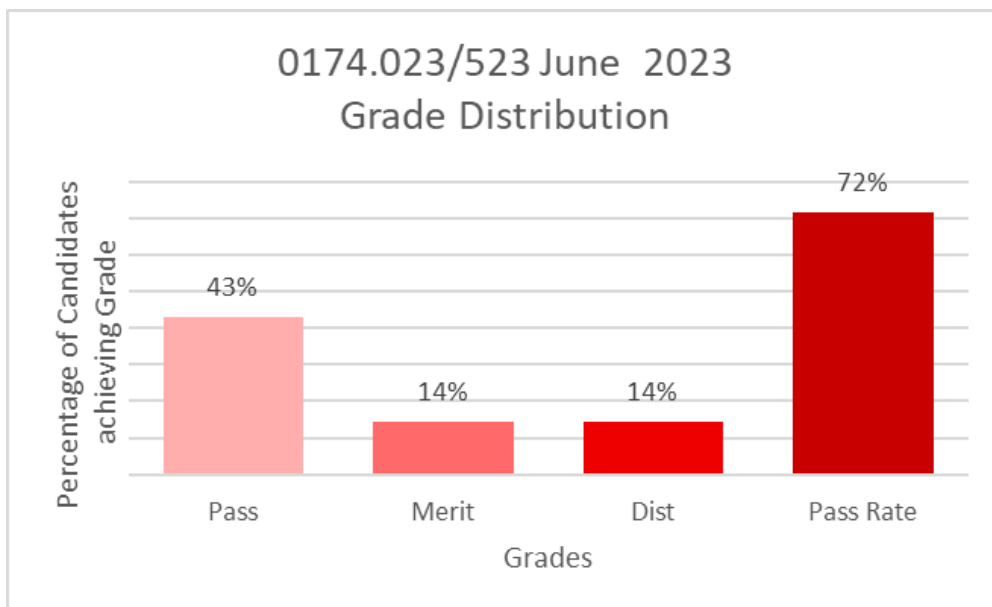
Grade Boundaries table

Assessment: 0174-523/023
Series: June 2023 (Summer)

Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment.

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

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 2023)

The June 2022 series paper was compared with June 2022 and March 2023 papers. It was considered to be very similar in terms of content, level of difficulty and accessibility. Both format and language used were very similar and some questions were directly comparable, such as testing understanding relating to selecting tree species to plant in a small garden in the June 2023 series, a busy urban environment in June 2022 series and a large scale forestry project in the March 2023 series.

Pass rate was lower than in March 2023 series and the majority of candidates who did pass only achieved a Pass grade, whereas in March 2023 the majority of candidates achieved either Merit or Distinction. Candidates struggled to answer AO2 and AO4 question correctly, which is perhaps a reflection of the fact that this series is likely to have included candidates who failed the March 2023 series resitting the exam in June.

As there were very few entries for this series, it is difficult to draw strong conclusions regarding pattern of candidate performance across the Units. Although there was no strong pattern as regards performance across the curriculum, candidates performed less well when the focus of the question was more forestry and/or larger scale operations than arboriculture/ small scale operations regardless of the Unit being tested. For example, most candidates selected hand digging as the most appropriate method of ground preparation for a large area with an iron pan and the majority of candidates selected standards over transplants as the most appropriate tree stock for forestry planting.

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. Most 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 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
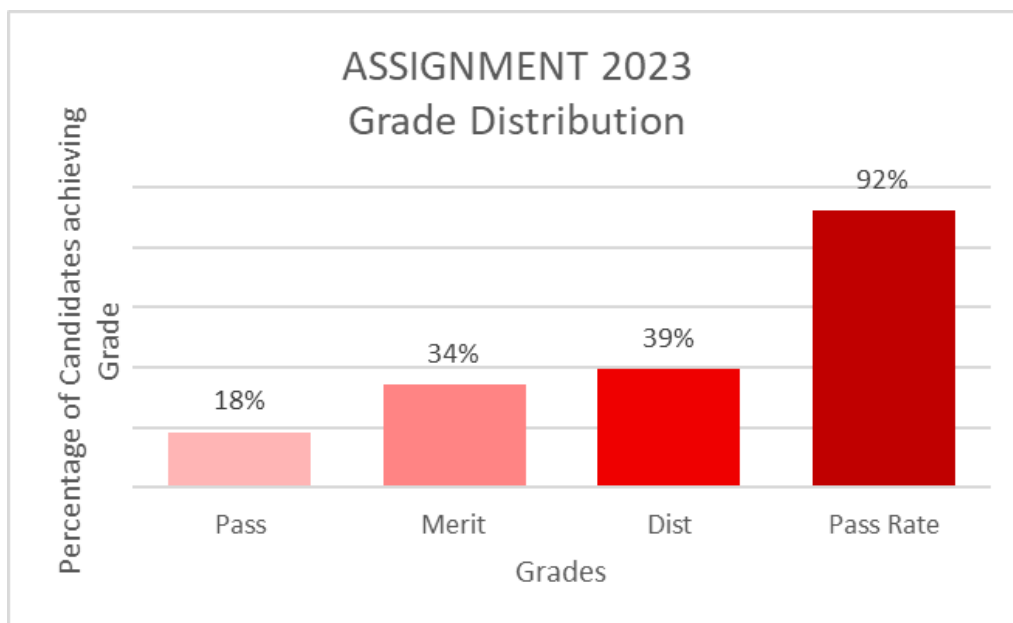
Synoptic Assignment

Grade Boundaries

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

Assessment: 0174-022
Series: June 2023

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	23
Merit mark	31
Distinction mark	40

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

Principal Moderator Commentary

Comments on centre administration

All Moderators for the qualification stated the administration for all Centres was generally good with only a few requiring additional requests for missing documents, or for the evidence to be re uploaded due to the lack of quality with scanned evidence making it hard to decipher. This was particularly noted with practical evidence.

The standard of marking was not consistent. Whilst some was considered to be exemplary, the lack of attention to detail was of concern. AO's and POF's lacked detail on the assessment observed, as well as Centre Name, Number, Date and names of both assessor and learner.
Centre markers should also write the feedback in the Third Person, due to the feedback not being read by the learner. In a lot of examples, the feedback was written in the Second Person.
Centres are advised to check for the quality and accuracy of the uploaded evidence, as well as ensuring that all required documentation is present. That being said, the majority of centre documents and candidate evidence was uploaded to the portal by the deadline.

Overall performance of candidates compared to expectations

The performance of learners overall was good, with evidence from each candidate mostly meeting appropriate expectations across the range of ability. The quality of practical work demonstrated a higher understanding and ability than the more theoretical tasks, which was to be expected. Learners in a higher banding demonstrating causal links between theory and practice.

Provision of evidence for moderation

Some POFs contained terminology not aligning to the relevant banding, this making moderation of forms difficult. Photographic evidence used to support the candidates work was not always fully annotated which did match the written evidence.

To avoid this type of evidence being little more than a collection of photographs and therefore being disregarded, a brief commentary must be provided for each photo confirming the activity and learners work, along with how it relates to each assessment or learning outcomes.

General overview of assessor alignment

Assessor/moderator alignment was within tolerance in most cases with the exception of AO3 which was, in some cases, marked down within the CRF.

Performance against Assessment Outcomes (AOs)

AO1 Recall of knowledge related to the qualification LO's

Accurately marked, with a good level of knowledge evident across the written tasks. Evidence was mostly detailed, which was followed through to the practical activities with the most learners. This demonstrating a sound ability to apply practical skills. Comments on the PO Forms were mostly accurate.

AO2 Understanding of concepts theories and processes relating to the Los

Assessing the learners ability to apply concepts and theories was embedded in Task 1
enabling learners to provide causal links between theoretical knowledge and understanding. The justification of choices made, and the consideration of relevant alternatives was poor with lower

banded learners, however they were able to make straightforward links and provide some basic explanations and justifications. Learners at the upper end of the marking band demonstrated a more in depth knowledge and understanding, consolidation and applying theory to practice.

AO3 Application of practical/technical skills

The learners practical ability and performance was commented on in detail in most cases, confirming competence in a range of technical skills across the breadth of the qualification. Marked correctly in the most of cases, the AO included accurate marker comments on the CRF which aligned with information in the Practical Observation Forms. The majority of candidates demonstrated natural practical abilities, however some exceptions to this were noted.

However some comments were noted within Band 3 learners, relating to the lack of industry speed while this is to be expected, as in previous year's feedback, it is strongly recommended that more time is allocated to practical skills where possible.

Photographic evidence to support the markers commentary assists with the moderation process, only when accompanied by adequate annotation, captions or direct links within the markers notes to outline what each of the photographs are showing, and how that provides evidence for the associated outcomes.

Without any effective commentary moderators will not be able to assess the value of the photos against the outcomes being assessed. In future assessments, Centres are required to address this issue if providing photographs as supporting evidence of a learners performance against the outcomes.

AO4 Bringing it all together- coherence of the whole subject

Learners had provided evidence demonstrating a range of abilities in the understanding of knowledge and skills from across the breadth of the qualification. Feedback from the markers demonstrated sound causal links and connections from a range of tasks, this enabled the marks awarded to be accurate in the majority of cases.

AO5 Attending to detail/perfecting

All Moderators noted that learners at a higher level and ability were able to continually review their work and make any adjustments during practical activities. The AO being marked correctly in most cases. Attention to detail was generally noted within Tasks 1 and 2, comments made by Markers on POFs referring to the quality of finish and necessary adjustments made to working techniques in response to changing conditions or unforeseen problems.