

# 0174-20 Level 2 Technical Certificate in Horticulture

2023

**Qualification Report**

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# 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.

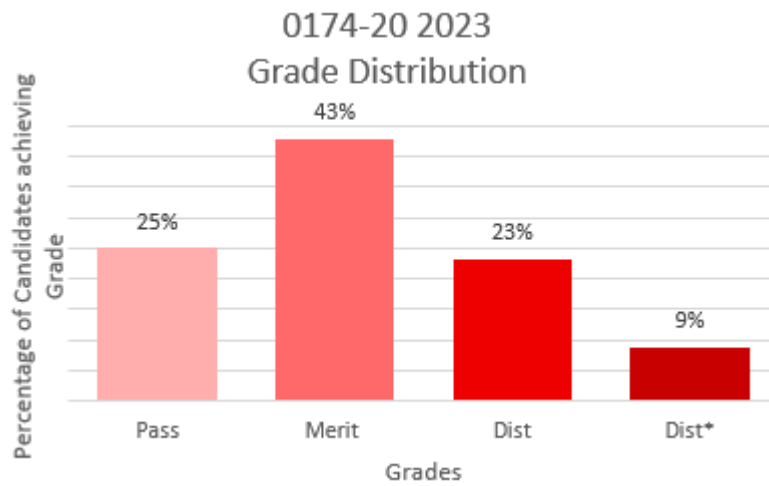
This report provides general commentary on candidate performance in both the synoptic assignment and theory exam. It highlights common themes in relation to the technical aspects explored within the assessment, giving areas of strengths and weakness demonstrated by the cohort of candidates who sat assessments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

- 0174-521 Level 2 Horticulture – Theory exam
  - March 2023 (Spring)
  - June 2023 (Summer)
- 0174-020 Level 2 Horticulture – 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

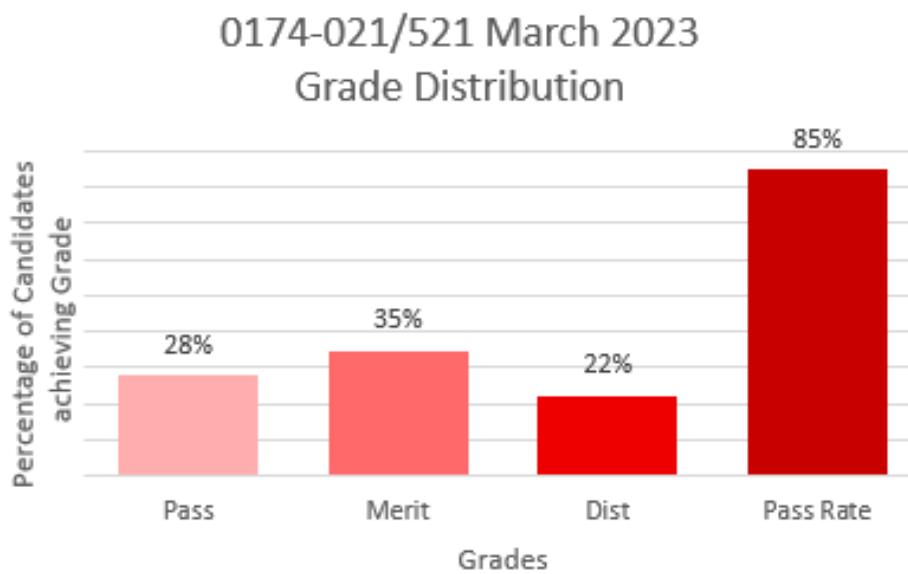
Assessment: 0174-521

Series: March 2023 (Spring)

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

<b>Total marks available</b>	<b>40</b>
Pass mark	16
Merit mark	21
Distinction mark	27

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

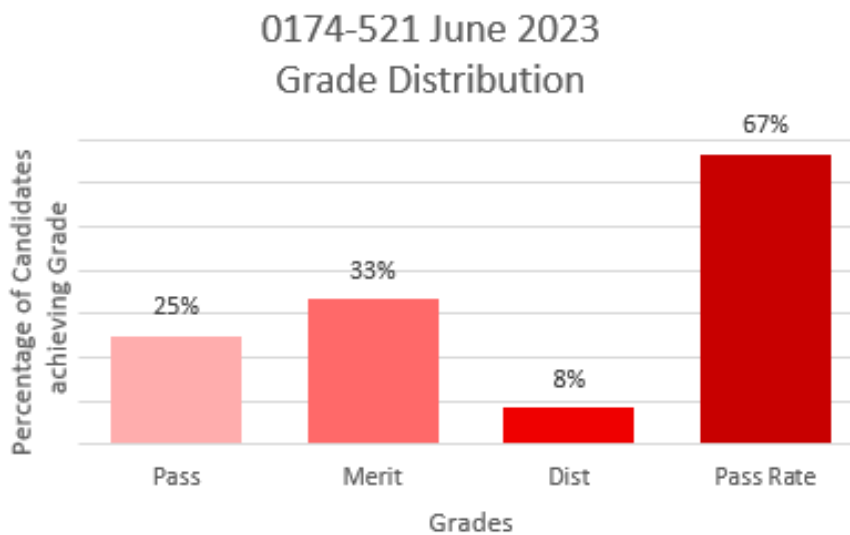


Assessment: 0174-521  
Series: June 2023 (Summer)

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

<b>Total marks available</b>	<b>40</b>
Pass mark	15
Merit mark	21
Distinction mark	27

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



# Chief Examiner Commentary

## 0174-521 Level 2 Horticulture- Theory exam

### Series 1 – March 2023

The paper was set at the appropriate level, was consistent with the test specification and featured a mixture of AO1 recall, AO2 understanding and AO4 applied knowledge questions. The terminology and technical content assessed in the question paper was to the correct level 2 standard.

The paper contained a good mix of questions for each topic area with a range of difficulty allowing for differentiation in knowledge.

Overall, AO1 questions were effectively answered by most candidates, and AO2 questions proved more difficult. AO4 scenario-based questions were found to be most challenging.

The strongest performing units were:

- Unit 202 Working in the horticulture industry.
- Unit 204 Preparation, planting and maintenance of plants.

The units that were seen to be more difficult were

- Unit 203 Plant naming, identification, selection and science
- Unit 206 Horticultural Business Practices.

Questions on botanical aspects caused difficulty across all levels of achievement and should be a renewed focus for future delivery. It was also notable that the questions on soils (structure and cultivation) proved challenging for lower-achieving candidates. This is a fundamental subject for horticulture and one that should be grasped by all candidates and entrants to the industry.

The AO4 scenario-based section of questions demonstrated a clear differentiation of performance between higher and lower achieving candidates and consideration could be given to ensuring that candidates are aware of the nature and methodology of this style of questioning.

An awareness of the importance of exam technique should also be considered in effectively preparing candidates. Candidates need to be reminded to take care and read the questions carefully.

## Series 2 – June 2023

The paper overall is broadly similar in content to previous papers, but the balance of question types is somewhat different. Specifically notable is the presence of six statement tables where comparisons are required, a question style that is often found to be more challenging. There is one illustration question, an approach that is usually found to be accessible. The balance across the test specification was consistent with previous years.

Overall, AO1 questions were effectively answered by most candidates, and AO2 questions proved more difficult. AO4 scenario-based questions were found to be most challenging.

The strongest performing units were:

- Unit 202 Working in the horticulture industry.
- Unit 206 Horticultural Business Practices.

The units that were seen to be more difficult were

- Unit 203 Plant naming, identification, selection and science
- Unit 204 Preparation, planting and maintenance of plants

One question asked about house plants, currently a very popular topic though not one that has often been assessed in this paper, and this caused difficulty across all levels of achievement.

Centres should be aware that all areas of the qualification are liable to be assessed and should therefore be a focus for future delivery.

It was also notable that the questions on soils (structure, texture and cultivation) proved challenging. This is a fundamental subject for horticulture and one that should be grasped by all candidates and entrants to the industry.

The AO4 scenario-based section of questions demonstrated a clear differentiation of performance between higher and lower achieving candidates and consideration could be given to ensuring that candidates are aware of the nature and methodology of this style of questioning. An awareness of the importance of exam technique should also be considered in effectively preparing candidates.

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

<https://www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/land-based-services/horticulture/0174-technical-in-horticulture-and-forestry-arboriculture#tab=documents>



# Synoptic Assignment

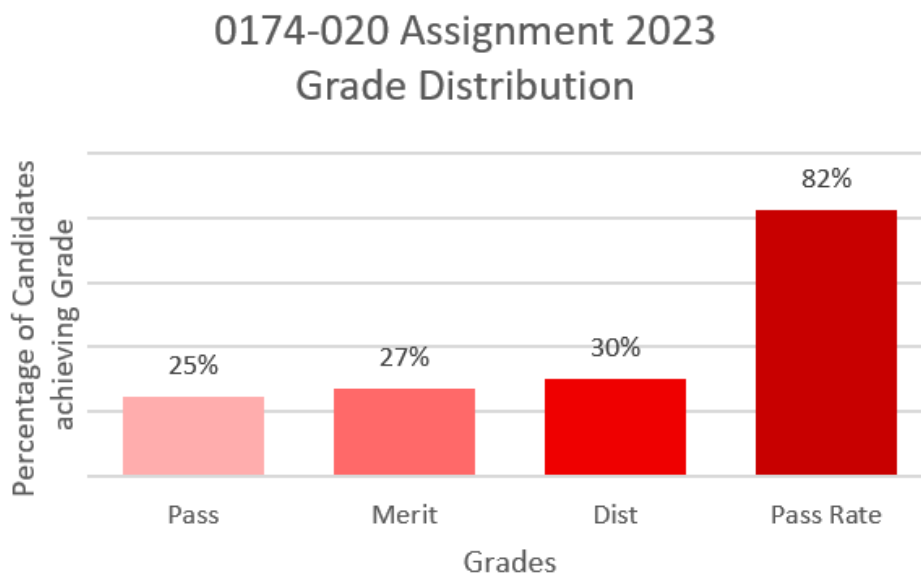
## Grade Boundaries

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

Assessment: 0174-020  
Series: 2023

<b>Total marks available</b>	<b>60</b>
Pass mark	24
Merit mark	33
Distinction mark	42

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



## Principal Moderator Commentary

The assignment was assessed at centres experienced in the delivery of the qualification and that was, in general, evident. The assignment context was the same as the previous year, to develop an educational garden for students at a secondary school.

Task 1 required candidates to create planting schemes for new borders of set dimensions and soil conditions which develop awareness of the educational and environmental value of plants. Where this was effectively embedded, work was produced of a good standard, but this was not consistently the case across centres. Differentiation was not always clear in how this was being addressed, and marking was inconsistent when considering the suitability of plants for both the required characteristics and suitability for the site in terms of dimensions, with large shrubs and trees being suggested for small borders on a number of occasions. Appropriate use of scientific names was inconsistent. Most submissions did recommend sources for plants, but again this was not consistently the case.

Task 2 concerned the renovation of worn grassed areas around the school borders, and as with the previous year, differentiation between renovation and routine maintenance was often absent.

Tasks 3 and 4 were practical tasks and were assessed effectively in the great majority of cases. For task 3, risk assessments were also required and in most cases were seen to be appropriate and were assessed effectively.

Practical Observation (PO) forms were used in varying ways across centres, with some producing clear contextual commentary linking evidence seen directly to band descriptors for AOs. AO1 and AO2 were differentiated well by some markers but, on others, comments were identical: AO1 is recall of knowledge, AO2 is understanding, and thus implies application of knowledge in the context of the task.

Evidence for all assessment is collated and summarised on the Candidate Record Form (CRF). The quality of CRF completion was variable. Good CRF completion brings evidence in summary form from the PO form and is also clearly signposted in marking of written tasks. It was notable that some centres did not signpost effectively, and used a direct 'cut and paste' approach to bringing evidence from the PO form. Moderator reports to centres gave clear guidance as to changes that were needed in future, as ineffective completion of these forms can directly impact on the marks given.

Centres are asked:

- To include areas for improvement on the Candidate Record Form (CRF) unless the mark awarded is in the excellent band.
- To carefully check the addition of the total marks on the CRF.
- To annotate on candidate's work, incorrect statements and the quality of the work, e.g. areas which are good or lacking detail.
- When using dictation software to carefully check what has been typed.
- To upload all the forms and evidence as one document.