

0174-20 Level 2 Technical Certificate in Horticulture

2024

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.

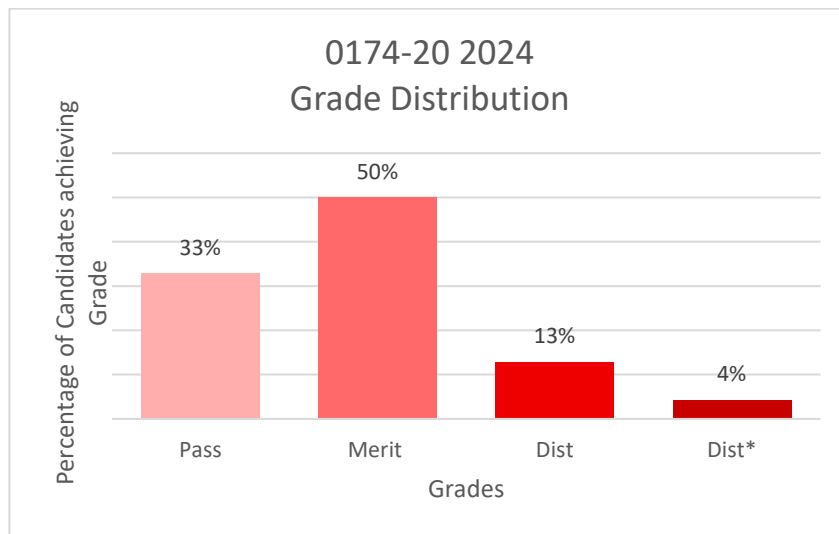
This report provides general commentary on candidate performance in both the synoptic assignment and theory exam. It highlights common themes in relation to the technical aspects explored within the assessment, giving areas of strengths and weakness demonstrated by the cohort of candidates who sat assessments in the 2024 academic year. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose.

The document provides commentary on the following assessments:

- 0174-521/021 Level 2 Horticulture – Theory exam
 - March 2024 (Spring)
 - June 2024 (Summer)
- 0174-020 Level 2 Horticulture – Synoptic Assignment

Qualification Grade Distribution

The approximate grade distribution for this qualification is shown below:



The data is based on the distribution as of 21/08/2024.

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

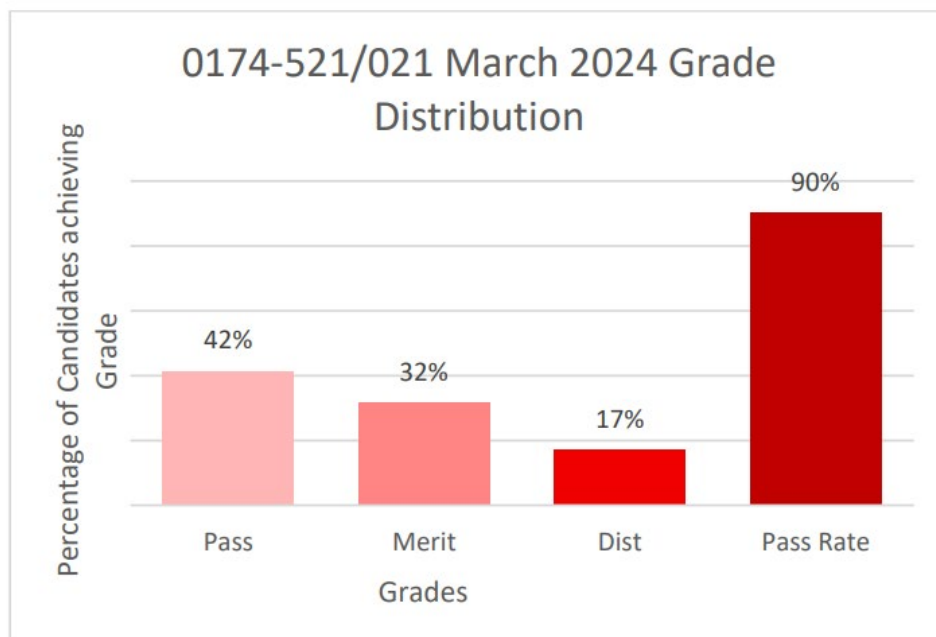
Grade Boundaries

Assessment: 0174-521/021
Series: March 2024 (Spring)

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

Total marks available	40
Pass mark	16
Merit mark	21
Distinction mark	27

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

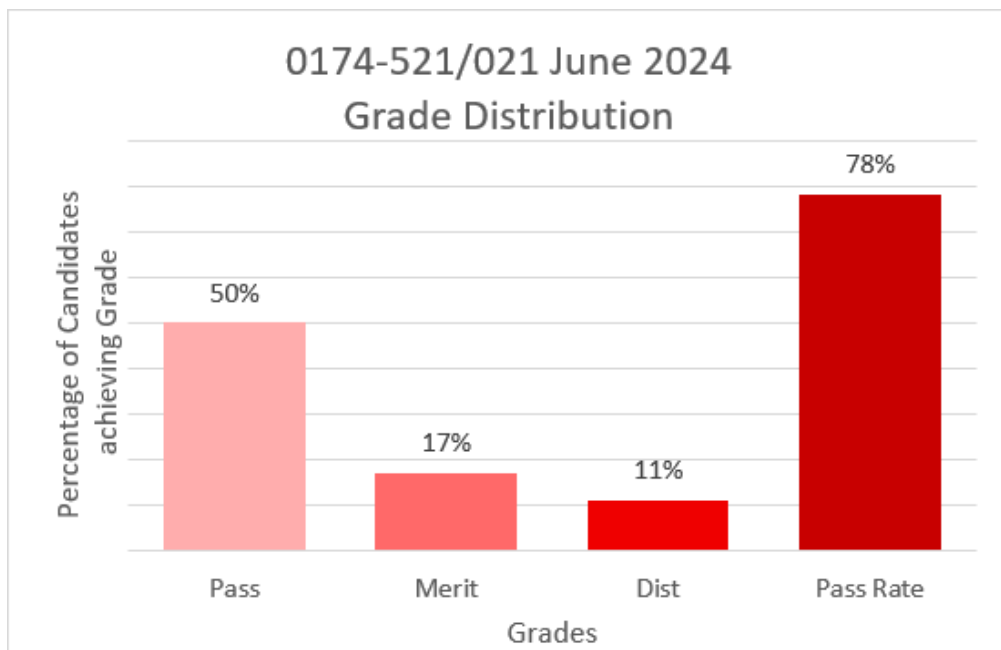


Assessment: 0174-521/021
Series: June 2024 (Summer)

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

Total marks available	40
Pass mark	16
Merit mark	21
Distinction mark	27

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



Chief Examiner Commentary

0174-521/021 Level 2 Horticulture- Theory exam

Series 1 – March 2024

Candidates generally showed strong recall in key areas and often achieved marks in questions that required knowledge recall. However, lower-performing candidates had difficulty providing clear explanations and therefore struggled to demonstrate understanding in their responses. Many lost marks in questions that required detailed explanations or descriptions and instead often provided statements. Lower-performing candidates also exhibited poor exam technique, especially in questions requiring the application of knowledge to specific topics.

The performance of the paper clearly indicates that AO1 questions were answered by most candidates successfully, AO2 questions proving more difficult and AO4 scenario-based questions the most challenging, some even amongst the high achieving candidates.

The following commentary outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the cohort:

Candidates had demonstrated a depth of knowledge regarding:

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

The cohort had demonstrated some gaps in knowledge with regards to:

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

Questions on botanical features, plant adaptation to site conditions and detailed awareness of plants by their scientific names were found to be more challenging. In the Business Practices unit awareness of some of the legal requirements also proved to be an area of weakness. Consideration should be given to greater focus on the plant, site and botanical aspects of the qualification, as these are fundamental skills and knowledge underpinning all horticulture.

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.

0174-521/021 Level 2 Horticulture- Theory exam

Series 2 – June 2024

Candidates performed better than that of June 2023, continuing to show understanding in Unit 202 Working in the horticulture industry, as well as showing improvement in Unit 204 Preparation, planting and maintenance of plants. Candidates continue to struggle with Unit 203 Plant naming, identification, selection and science. This was a fair paper covering all areas of the syllabus with a good range of knowledge, understanding and integrated questions across the units. This was a significantly smaller cohort compared to Spring, but typical of that of a summer entry.

AO1 questions were answered consistently better than AO2, particularly for Unit 202. Candidates were able to answer questions on basic plant structure more consistently than plant nomenclature or classification knowledge.

Overall, the cohort did not perform well on statement questions, with the exception of one relating to site specific hazards and pollution tolerant plants. There were clear gaps in knowledge across most areas for some individual candidates. As a cohort, aspects of botanical knowledge such as botanical naming and plant forms were general areas of weakness, as were questions relating to knowledge of specific plants. A number of high scoring candidates also performed poorly for these questions. Candidates struggled with making connections between topics, particularly within business and charities.

Overall, candidates had demonstrated a depth of knowledge in the following areas:

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

The cohort had demonstrated some gaps in knowledge in the following areas:

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

Centres are urged to remind candidates to read the question and following statement accurately. In addition, centres should also be aware that all areas of the qualification are liable to be assessed and should therefore be a focus for future delivery.

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

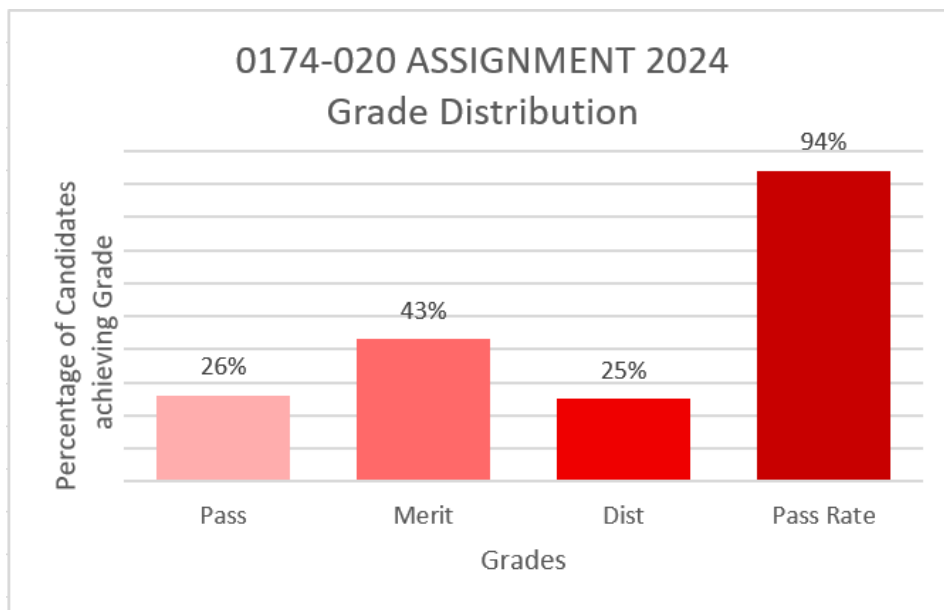
Grade Boundaries

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

Assessment: 0174-020
Series: 2024

Total marks available	60
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 some centres experienced in the delivery of the qualification and also in others that were either new this year or had significant staff changes since their previous use of the assignment. The assignment context was similar to the previous year, to develop an educational garden for students at a secondary school.

Task 1 required candidates to create a planting scheme for a new border 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 to a good standard. 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 on a number of occasions. Appropriate use of scientific names was very inconsistent both in centres and between centres in the marking that was viewed. Most submissions did recommend sources for plants, though not always.

Task 2 was a practical activity which required candidates to prepare a set area using primary cultivation to leave the site ready for planting. The task was to be undertaken using hand tools. This task was seen to be appropriately managed in most cases. Recording forms would benefit from more consistency.

Task 3 was a practical task and was assessed effectively in the great majority of cases. A risk assessment was also required and in most cases was seen to be appropriate and assessed effectively. The use of electric mowers was offered as a choice at some centres. This does not affect the mowing activity in a direct sense but does impact the Risk Assessment, and Centres were advised to ensure that the Risk Assessment always considered the use of petrol-engine mowers in this part of the task.

Task 4 was a new practical activity, to prepare a site and sow grass seed. The task was implemented in variable ways at Centres. Assessment guidance should be followed appropriately.

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 guidance as to changes that were needed in future.

Centres are asked:

- To include areas where the candidate performance could have been better 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 written work any incorrect statements and the quality of the work, eg areas which are good or lacking detail.
- When using dictation software to carefully check what has been typed.
- Use of cut-and-paste commentary should be avoided.
- **To upload all the forms and evidence as one document.**