

0174-36

Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Horticulture (540)

2019

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.

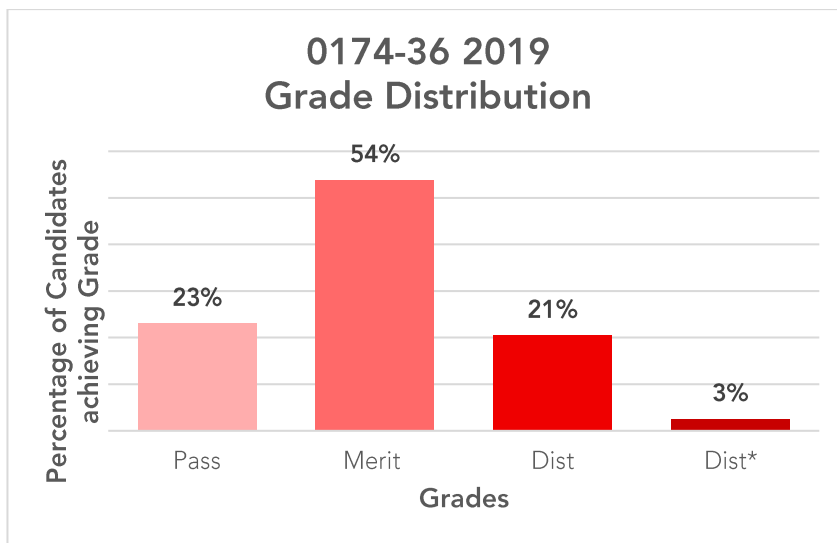
This report provides general commentary on candidate performance in both the synoptic assignment and theory exam. It highlights common themes in relation to the technical aspects explored within the assessment, giving areas of strengths and weakness demonstrated by the cohort of candidates who sat assessments in the 2019 academic year. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose.

The document provides commentary on the following assessments:

- 0174-002/502 Level 3 Horticulture – Theory exam (1)
 - March 2019 (Spring)
 - June 2019 (Summer)
- 0174-003 Level 3 Horticulture – Synoptic Assignment (1)

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

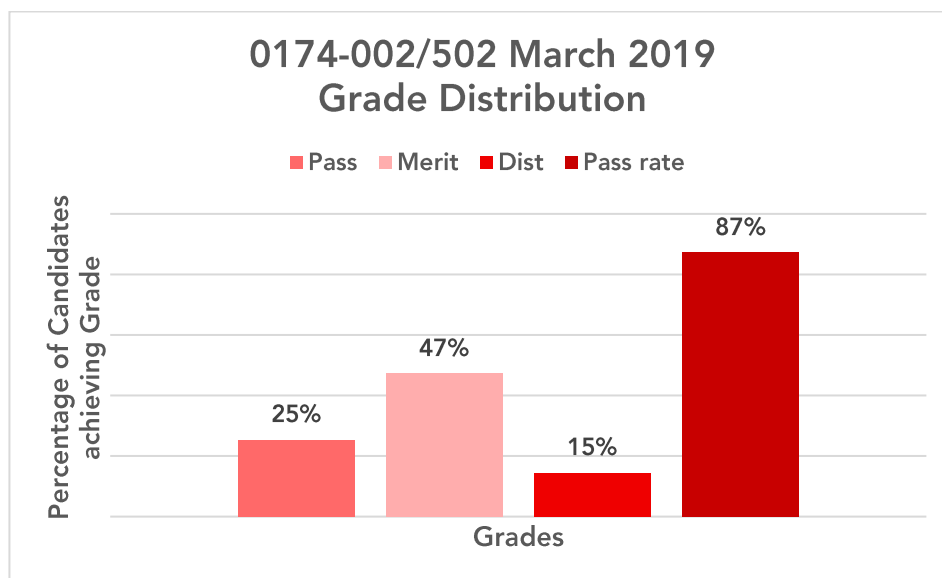
Grade Boundaries

Assessment: 0174-002/502
Series: March 2019 (Spring)

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

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	29
Merit mark	38
Distinction mark	48

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

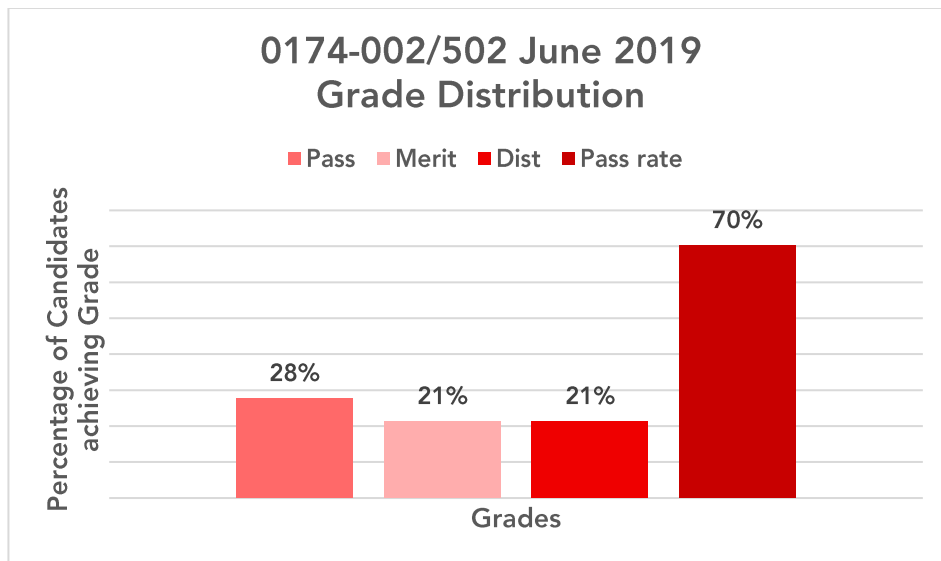


Assessment: 0174-002/502
Series: June 2019 (Summer)

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

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	26
Merit mark	36
Distinction mark	46

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



Chief Examiner Commentary

0174-002/502 - Theory exam

Series 1 – March 2019

The majority of questions for this paper were answered reasonably well. At least half of the candidates attempted and completed the majority of the questions and overall candidates were able to achieve high marks for the paper with relative ease. This explains the relatively high Pass mark boundary. Effective range of content was covered in the paper giving the candidates scope to develop answers, particularly in the extended response question, which distinguished between the different abilities. While this exam paper was balanced with regards to content it was slightly skewed in terms of ease and difficulty of questions i.e. the easier recall questions were perhaps too easy with virtually all candidates gaining all available marks while some of the mid and higher order questions tended to restrict any attempt by the lower level students to access any marks.

The standard of the candidate's responses was as expected in line with the varied levels. Responses at distinction level were easily identified from the lower grades in having an excellent breadth and depth of knowledge backed up by relevant examples and development of ideas. This was particularly evident in the extended question on the potential extremes of climate in the future, with candidates pulling information in from the whole curriculum and their own experiences to support their answers.

The understanding of some technical botanical terms used especially in taxonomy was identified as a weakness in the mid and lower scoring candidates. Candidates who did not take care to read the questions on pest and disease related questions provided incorrect answers and could not access marks from two questions.

Specific areas of strength for many candidates were:

- Machinery checks.
- Health and safety and the relevance of PPE and risk assessments with links to environmental health as well as people.
- An awareness of the importance of integrated approaches to horticulture.

Specific areas of weakness for many candidates were:

- Identification of leaf shape and arrangement. Many candidates confused the terminology and therefore were unable to access any of the marks available.
- Knowledge of what trees and shrubs suited specific locations.
- Technical botanical terms used especially in reference to taxonomy.
- Accuracy of Botanic/Latin names used.

Series 2 – June 2019

Effective range of content was covered in the paper giving the candidates scope to develop answers, particularly in the extended response question, which distinguished between the different abilities. This exam paper was reasonably balanced with regard to content and there was a range of questions pitched at low, mid and higher order.

The standard of the candidate's responses was as expected in line with the varied levels. Responses at distinction level were easily identified from the lower grades in having an excellent breadth and depth of knowledge backed up by relevant examples and development of ideas. This was particularly evident in the extended question on Integrated Pest Management and links with sustainability, with candidates pulling information in from the whole curriculum and their own experiences to support their answers.

The use or lack of use of technical botanical terms was again identified as a weakness in the mid and lower level candidates. Candidates who did not read the questions carefully provided incorrect or incomplete answers and could not access all the marks. Invariable these candidates missed out on all available marks because answers lacked context.

Specific areas of strength for many candidates were:

- Battery versus petrol machines.
- An awareness of the importance of integrated approaches to horticulture.

Specific areas of weakness for many candidates were:

- Identification of common weed species and their botanical names.
- Knowledge of what trees and shrubs suited specific location.
- Off target contamination
- Nomenclature of plants and identifying characteristics.
- Accuracy of Botanic/Latin names used.

City & Guilds has produced a technical exam guide to support the work on the exam technique, which is available to download from

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

Centres may also refer to the past papers available to download from the same webpage under the Past Papers tab.

Candidates should be reminded to familiarise themselves with the requirements of command verbs, and for each verb the type of responses required in relation to depth and breadth.

Synoptic Assignment

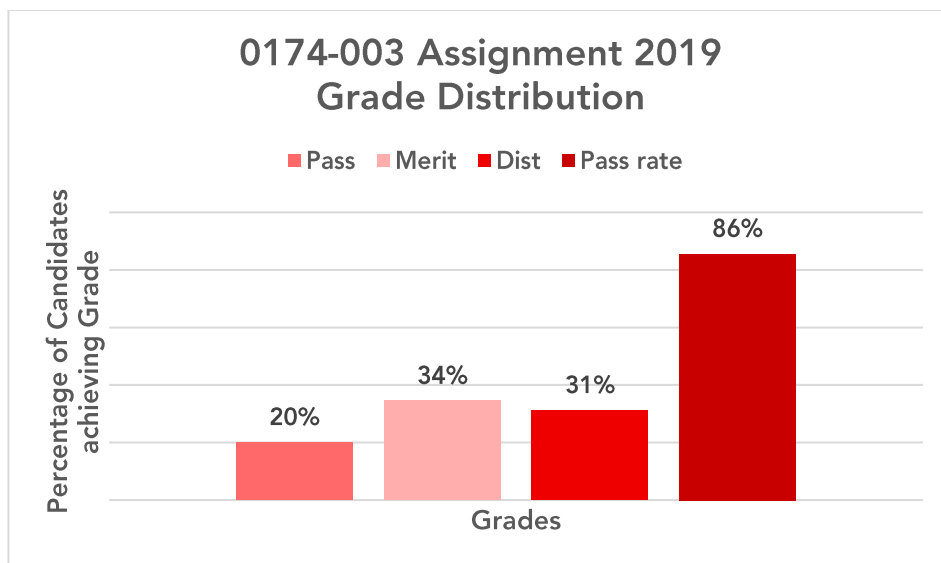
Grade Boundaries

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

Assessment: 0174-003
Series: 2019

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	26
Merit mark	34
Distinction mark	43

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



Principal Moderator Commentary

The assignment was in general assessed effectively. However, the context of the Assignment Brief was integral to the tasks being assessed, and this was not taken fully into account at all Centres. For example, the site identified for use in Task 1 was intended to be 'near to office buildings' and some Centres were using open-ground or garden areas for this survey, which then limited the range of factors which could be taken into account.

In general, AO1 was judged accurately by centres, with clarity of how a mark was justified that could, during moderation, be linked easily to the marker(s) comments and/or written submissions from candidates. Where reference to the AOs was made, this was accepted and provided good evidence that the assessors were noting appropriate areas.

AO2 was less clear, with the lack of separation between 'known/not known' plants used in Task 1 making it difficult for moderation to separate out knowledge from understanding. This was less an issue when related to the other tasks, and in particular very good comments were present to show connections between understanding demonstrated, or explained, during the Practical Tasks 3 and 4. Where reference to the AOs was made, this was accepted and provided good evidence that the assessors were noting appropriate areas.

AO3 was addressed and judged well throughout the assignment with the main variance being the level of detail on commentary from assessors. Some used two lines from the chosen band descriptor; at the other extreme 400 words of the details of each task were provided, with no reference to any band descriptors. Some centres were 'copying and pasting' the complete contents of the PO forms onto the CRF, which was not appropriate, and again, this was fed back by the moderators.

AO4 was addressed accurately against the PO Forms though some centres were better than others at seeing the wider context of AO4.

AO5 was generally effectively managed. Some Centres tended to focus solely on the PO Form evidence for this, however, rather than taking all the tasks into consideration