

0174-502 – Level 3 Horticulture - Theory exam (1)

March 2025

Examiner Report

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Introduction

This document has been prepared by the Principal Examiner, it is designed to be used as a feedback tool for centres to use in order to enhance teaching and preparation for assessment. It is advised that this document be referred to when preparing to teach and then again when candidates are preparing to sit examinations for City & Guilds Technical qualifications.

This report provides general commentary on candidate performance and 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 the **March 2025** examination series. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose, whether it was caused by a lack of knowledge, incorrect examination technique or responses that failed to demonstrate the required depth of understanding.

The document provides commentary on the following assessment;

0174-502 – Level 3 Horticulture - Theory exam (1)

Theory Exam – March 2025

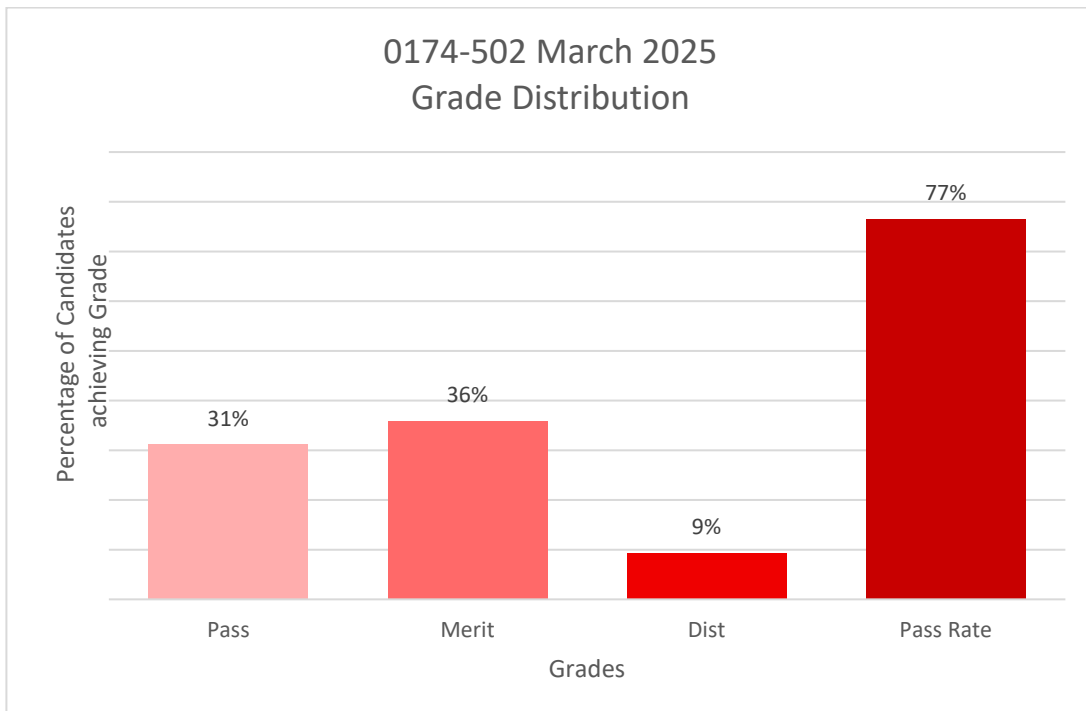
Grade Boundaries and distribution

Assessment: **0174-502**
Series: **March 2025**

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

Total marks available	60
Pass mark	27
Merit mark	36
Distinction mark	45

The graph below shows the approximate distribution of grades and pass rates for this assessment:



Principal Examiner Commentary

General Comments on Candidate Performance

Assessment component: 0174-502

Series 1 (March)

The question paper was balanced and covered a good level of knowledge and understanding from across the qualification. Candidates answered questions with varying degrees of accuracy and depth and, overall, the candidates' performance on the paper was comparable to last year. The use of technical terms relevant to industry was not as prevalent when compared to previous cohorts.

Candidates demonstrated a good recall of knowledge, gaining marks in topics such as tree roots, leaf adaptations, mulching and frost protection. Candidates showed strength in areas of plants and their care and some aspects of pest and disease management. Higher-achieving candidates showed evidence of reasoning and justification as well as the recall of knowledge required across all the units.

Many candidates demonstrated weaknesses in both the recall and understanding questions that related to machinery, chemical usage and Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Candidates who achieved in the lower mark range tended to also use basic language with poor use of technical terms, misread the questions or had only basic understanding of the topics, such as chemicals. There were clear gaps in knowledge with questions often not attempted. Their performance was stronger on the recall questions compared to higher order questions as would be expected.

The Extended Response Question provided candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of selecting appropriate plant stock and aftercare requirements to a given scenario. Most candidates provided a range of suitable answers for the first part of the question. At the lower mark range, answers to the second part were limited to listing a range of aftercare tasks and there was little explanation of the pros and cons of the methods selected. The depth of the answers in the mid/high mark range was good, with adequate explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of weed control, however, some candidates strayed into plant selection and other topics not related to the question in their answers. There was a lack of technical terminology, with many candidates not stating the type of herbicide they would use. Some candidates suggested manual weed controls that would not be practical. Candidates often missed technical issues such as the biology of perennial weeds and how this affects the choice of control. Health and Safety was generally not raised as an issue and most candidates did not refer to legislation.

A number of candidates showed that they were not fully familiar with the written examination technique, examples of this include providing information that is not directly relevant to the question, poorly structured responses and limited explanations that did not show a depth of knowledge. Candidates are urged to read the questions carefully and provide answers relevant to them.

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

[Horticulture qualifications and training courses | City & Guilds](#)