

Level 3 Technicals in Agriculture (0171-002/0171-502)

Part of 0171-30/31/32/33

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Guide to the examination

Who is this document for?

This document has been produced for centres who offer **City & Guilds Level 3 Technicals in Agriculture**. It gives all of the essential details of the qualification's external assessment (exam) arrangements and has been produced to support the preparation of candidates to take the exam/s.

The document comprises four sections:

1. **Details of the exam.** This section gives details of the structure, length and timing of the exam.
2. **Content assessed by the exam.** This section gives a summary of the content that will be covered in each exam and information of how marks are allocated to the content.
3. **Guidance.** This section gives guidance on the language of the exam, the types of questions included and examples of these, and links to further resources to support teaching and exam preparation.
4. **Further information.** This section lists other sources of information about this qualification and City & Guilds Technical Qualifications.

1. Details of the exam

External assessment

City & Guilds Technical qualifications have been developed to meet national policy changes designed to raise the rigour and robustness of vocational qualifications. These changes are being made to ensure our qualifications can meet the needs of employers and Higher Education. One of these changes is for the qualifications to have an increased emphasis on external assessment. This is why you will see an external exam in each of our Technical qualifications.

An external assessment is an assessment that is set and/or marked by the awarding organisation (ie externally). All City and Guilds Technical qualifications include an externally set and marked exam. This must be taken at the same time by all candidates who are registered on a particular qualification. We produce an exam timetable each year. This specifies the date and time of the exam so you can plan your delivery, revision and room bookings/PC allocation in plenty of time.

The purpose of this exam is to provide assurance that all candidates achieving the qualification have gained sufficient knowledge and understanding from their programme of study and that they can independently recall and draw their knowledge and understanding together in an integrated way. Whilst this may not be new to you, it is essential that your learners are well prepared and that they have time to revise, reflect and prepare for these exams. We have produced a Teaching, Learning, and Assessment guide that is you should refer to alongside the present document ([Teaching, Learning and Assessment Guide](#)). If a learner does not pass the exam at their first attempt, there is only one opportunity to resit the exam, so preparation is essential.

Exam requirements of this qualification

-Level 3 Technicals in Agriculture – Theory test (2 hours)

The exam is graded and a candidate must achieve at least a Pass grade in order to be awarded the qualification. (In addition to the exam, a synoptic assignment must also be completed and passed. You can find full details of the synoptic assignment in the *Qualification Handbook* and the *Synoptic Assessment Guide* -please see the links at the end of this document).

When does the exam take place?

The exam is offered on two fixed dates in March or June. The exact dates will be published at the start of the academic year in the *Assessments and Exam Timetable* <http://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/exams-and-admin>.

At the start of the programme of study, in order to effectively plan teaching and exam preparation, centres should know when the exam will be taking place and allocate teaching time accordingly. Section 2 of this document gives a summary of the content that needs to be covered in order to prepare learners for the exam and full details of this are given in the *Qualification Handbook*.

Form of exam

The exam for this qualification can be taken either on paper (0171-502) or online (0171-002).

Can candidates resit the exam?

Candidates may resit the exam once only. If a candidate fails the exam both on the first attempt and when resitting it, that candidate has failed the qualification and cannot achieve it in that academic year.

How the exam is structured

Each exam has a total of 60 marks available.

Each exam is made up of:

- approximately 12-14 short answer questions;
- 1 extended response question.

Multiple choice and short answer questions are used to confirm **breadth of knowledge and understanding**.

The extended response question is to allow candidates to demonstrate **higher level and integrated understanding** through written discussion, analysis and evaluation. This question also ensures the exam can differentiate between those learners who are 'just able' and those who are higher achieving.

More details about and examples of question types are given in Section 3 of this document.

Assessment Objectives

The exams are based on the following set of assessment objectives (AOs). These are designed to allow the candidate's responses to be assessed across the following three categories of performance:

- **Recollection** of knowledge.
- **Understanding** of concepts, theories and processes.
- **Integrated application** of knowledge and understanding.

In full, the assessment objectives covered by the exam for this qualification are:

Assessment objective	Mark allocation (approx %)
<i>The candidate..</i>	
AO1 Recalls knowledge from across the breadth of the qualification	25%
AO2 Demonstrates understanding of concepts, theories and processes from a range of learning outcomes.	55%
AO4 Applies knowledge, understanding and skills from across the breadth of the qualification in an integrated and holistic way to achieve specified purposes.	20%

Booking and taking the exam

All assessments for City & Guilds Technical Exams must be booked through Walled Garden. There is a deadline for booking exams, synoptic assessments and any other centre marked assessments, please refer to the time line to check these dates.

The exam must be taken under the supervision of an invigilator who is responsible for ensuring that it is conducted under controlled conditions. Full details of the conditions under which the exam must be taken can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document, [Instructions for Conducting Examinations \(ICE\)](#).

Special consideration

Candidates who are unable to sit the exam owing to temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the scheduled time may qualify for special consideration. This is a post-examination adjustment that can, in certain circumstances, be made to a candidate's final grade. The Joint Council for Qualifications' guide to the special consideration process can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

To make a request for special consideration, please contact: policy@cityandguilds.com

Access arrangements

Access arrangements are arrangements that allow candidates with particular requirements, disabilities or temporary illness to take assessments, where appropriate, using their normal way of working. The Joint Council for Qualifications document, *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* gives full details and can be downloaded [here](#).

For further information and to apply for access arrangements please see:

[Access arrangements - When and how applications need to be made to City & Guilds](#)
[Applying for access arrangements on the Walled Garden](#)

2. Content assessed by the exam

The exam assesses:

- **Unit 303: Land based industry machinery operations**
- **Unit 304: Agricultural Crop production**
- **Unit 305: Plant and Soil Science**
- **Unit 307: Livestock husbandry**

Each exam assesses a sample of the content of these units. This means that a single exam will **not** cover 100% of the unit content. The full range of content will be assessed over a number of examination series. Details of the coverage of a particular exam paper will **not** be released in advance of the exam itself. Centres should **not** make assumptions about what will be assessed by a particular exam based on what has been covered on previous occasions. In order to be fully prepared for the exam, learners **must** be ready to answer questions on **any** of the content outlined below.

The table below provides an overview of how the qualification's Learning Outcomes are covered by each exam and the number of **marks** available per Learning Outcome (ie **not** the number of *questions* per Learning Outcome). In preparing candidates for the exam, we recommend that centres take note of the number of marks allocated to Learning Outcomes and to assign teaching and preparation time accordingly.

In preparing candidates for the exam, centres should refer to the Qualification Handbook which gives full details of each Learning Outcome.

The following is a summary of only that qualification content which is assessed by the exam and **not** a summary of the full content of the qualification.

Unit	Learning outcome	Topics	Number of marks
303 Land based industry machinery operations.	LO1 Recognise the purpose and operation of land-based machines	1.1 Current legislation and industry guidance for land-based machinery operation 1.2 Purpose and operation of land-based machines	4
	LO2 Prepare land based industry machinery for work	2.1 Machinery preparation 2.2 Carry out pre-use checks 2.3 Identify common faults and suggest appropriate remedial action	

		2.4 Check and report on safety requirements ort on safety requirements	
	LO3 Operate land-based machinery	3.1 Carry out risk assessments 3.2 How to minimise possible environmental impacts of using selected land-based machine 3.3 Operate land based industry machinery 3.4 Carry out post operating procedures	
304 Agricultural Crop production	LO1 Know how to establish crops for given markets	1.1 Crops and their life cycles 1.2 End use and key market requirements 1.3 Planting specifications 1.4 Crop rotation	8
	LO2 Plan the nutrition of crops	2.3 Function of nutrients, deficiency/excess symptoms	
	LO3 Understand control measures for weeds, pests and diseases	3.1 Weeds, pests and diseases 3.2 Importance of weed, pest and disease control 3.3 Weed, pest and disease biology 3.4 Cultural and chemical control	
	LO4 Understand harvest and storage losses and production costs	4.1 Yield and quality losses during harvest 4.2 Storage conditions for crops 4.3 Production costs for crops	
305 Plant and Soil Science	LO1 Recognise the function of plant structures	1.1 Internal and external structures of plants 1.2 Function of plant structures	21

	LO2 Understand the main physiological processes and growth and development of plants	2.1 Processes of plant physiology 2.2 Life cycle of selected plants 2.3 Growth and development of plants	
	LO3 Understand how soils affect plant growth and development	3.2 Investigate characteristics of soil types 3.3 Affects soils have on plant growth and development 3.4 Cultural techniques that affect soil characteristics	
307 Livestock husbandry	LO1 Understand beef husbandry	1.1 UK Beef Industry 1.2 Beef production systems	15
	LO2 Understand dairy husbandry	2.1 UK Dairy Industry 2.2 Dairy cows year	
	LO3 Understand pig husbandry	3.1 UK Pig industry 3.2 Pig production systems	
	LO4 Understand sheep husbandry	4.1 UK Sheep Industry 4.2 Sheep production systems	
		Total marks for sections:	48 marks
		Integration across units*:	12 marks
		Total marks for exam:	60 marks

* *Integration across units.* These marks relate to Assessment Objective 4). These marks are awarded to differentiate between levels of performance by candidates taking the exam. The marks are given for how well a candidate has applied their knowledge, understanding and skills from across the units that make up the qualification in an integrated way to meet the requirements of the exam questions.

3. Guidance

Vocabulary of the exam: use of 'command' verbs

The exam questions are written using 'command' verbs. These are used to communicate to the candidate the type of answer required. Candidates should be familiarised with these as part of their exam preparation.

The following guidance has been produced on the main command verbs used in City & Guilds Technicals exams.

A more detailed version of this table, which also includes the command verbs used in the assignments is published in *City & Guilds Technical Qualifications Teaching, Learning and Assessment* guide.

Command verb	Explanation and guidance
Analyse	Study or examine a complex issue, subject, event, etc in detail to explain and interpret, elements, causes, characteristics etc
Calculate	Work out the answer to a problem using mathematical operations
Compare (...and contrast) (or describe the similarities/differences)	Consider and describe the similarities (and differences) between two or more features, systems, ideas, etc
Define	Give the meaning of, technical vocabulary, terms, etc.
Describe	Give a detailed written account of a system, feature, etc (..the effect of...on...) the impact, change that has resulted from a cause, event, etc (..the process..) give the steps, stages, etc
Differentiate between	Establish and relate the characteristic differences between two or more things, concepts, etc
Discuss	Talk/write about a topic in detail, considering the different issues, ideas, opinions related to it
Distinguish between	Recognise and describe the characteristic differences between two things, or make one thing seem different from another
Evaluate	Analyse and describe the success, quality, benefits, value, etc (of an end product, outcome, etc)
Explain	Make (a situation, idea, process, etc) clear or easier to understand by giving details, (..how..) Give the stages or steps, etc in a process, including relationships, connections, etc between these and causes and effects.

Give example(s) illustrate/	Use examples or images to support, clarify or demonstrate, an explanation, argument, theory, etc
Give a rationale	Provide a reason/reasons/basis for actions, decisions, beliefs, etc
Identify	Recognise a feature, usually from a document, image, etc and state what it is
Justify	Give reasons for, make a case for, account for, etc decisions, actions, conclusions, etc, in order to demonstrate why they suitable for or correct or meet the particular circumstances, context
Label	Add names or descriptions, indicating their positions, on an image, drawing, diagram, etc
List	Give as many answers, examples, etc as the question indicates (candidates are not required to write in full sentences)
Name	Give the (technical) name of something
Propose	Present a plan, strategy, etc (for consideration, discussion, acceptance, action, etc).
Select	choose the best, most suitable, etc, by making careful decisions
State	Give the answer, clearly and definitely
Summarise	Give a brief statement of the main points (of something)

Question types

The following explains, and gives examples of, types of questions used in City & Guilds Technical exams. In preparing candidates to take the exam, it is recommended that you familiarise them with the requirements of each question type so that they can be effective and make best use of the time available when sitting the exam.

- An effective candidate will gauge the type and length of response required from the question and the number of marks available (which is given for each question on the exam paper).
- Short answer questions may not require candidates to write in complete sentences. Extended response questions will require a more developed response.
- Candidates should read the exam paper before attempting to answer the questions and should allocate time proportionate to the number of marks available for each question or section.

Question type:

Multiple Choice questions

These are objective questions with a predetermined answer. These consist of a question (or stem) and four options. The candidate should select the correct option (the

Example question:

N.A

key). The other 3 options (the distractors) will be plausible but incorrect in some significant respect so that the candidate is required to consider and reject these in order to identify the correct option.

Short answer questions (restricted response)

These are questions which require candidates to give a brief and concise written response. The number of marks available will correspond to the number of pieces of information/examples and the length of response required by the question.

List **six** management/husbandry activities necessary for piglets on an indoor intensive system from birth to weaning.

Answer

1 mark for each of the following, maximum of 6 marks

- Food
- Water
- Clean environment
- Iron injection
- Colostrum intake
- Check growth rate
- Vaccinate/treatments
- Weigh at weaning and record litter weights
- Any other relevant answer

Structured Response Questions

These are questions that have more than one part (eg a), b), etc.). The overall question is made up of linked, short answer questions which move the candidate through the topic in a structured way. For example, the question will usually start with a 'recall'/'state'/'describe' question followed by an 'explain' to draw out understanding of the topic. They usually have a shared introductory 'stem', and the number of marks may increase through the question.

a. Explain the terms soil structure and soil texture.

Answer:

Soil structure – how the soil particles are formed into crumbs (1 mark)

Soil texture – the amount of sand, silt and clay in a soil (1 mark)

b. State which can be more easily improved - soil structure or soil texture. Give **three** examples of how you would do this.

Answer:

Soil structure is the easiest to be improved (1 mark)

Ways to improve soil structure (1 mark for each of the following; max of 3 marks):

- adding organic matter
 - subsoiling
-

- cultivating
- any other relevant answer

Extended response questions

Extended response questions are those that require the candidate to write a longer written response using sentences and paragraphs. These usually require candidates to discuss, explain, etc. a topic in some detail. The question is often based on a short case study, scenario or other prompt. The level of detail should be gauged from the question and the number of marks available.

You are deciding what cultivation method to use for a farm. You have a choice of ploughing or minimum cultivations. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of both and justify your choice. (12 marks)

Indicative content:

Ploughing

Advantages

- good weed control
- breaks up surface compaction
- produces a clean seed bed
- buries surface trash
- helps control slugs
- helps prevent diseases
- any other relevant answer

Disadvantages

- slow operation – delays to sowing
- expensive (fuel and labour)
- can cause erosion
- more moisture loss
- any other relevant answer

Minimum cultivations

Advantages

- faster
- cheaper – less fuel and labour
- keeping organic matter in top layer ie available to the plant
- conserves moisture
- any other relevant answer

Disadvantages

- poorer weed control
- can't be carried where surface compaction is an issue
- can be difficult to drill with surface trash
- poorer control of slugs
- any other relevant answer

Band 1 (1-4 marks)

Basic discussion of advantages and disadvantages of both cultivation methods. Discussion is not well developed or balanced.

Limited justification with some understanding of considerations shown but limited to a few factors. There will be little or no specialist terms.

Example answer for Band 1:

Advantages of ploughing are that you can plough a dry soil and bury the trash. This will give the soil ore nutrients after FYM has been spread over the field first. This will give any crop a better chance of growing, making the soil a bit more compact and then rolling the soil after ploughing to even the surface.

Disadvantages are that if ground is too wet to work, ploughing will need to be done to even moisture. If the fields are ploughed incorrectly this could potentially ruin the surface area, making the field water logged and killing crops.

Band 2 (5-8 marks)

Adequate discussion of advantages and disadvantages of both cultivation methods. Adequate justification with good understanding of considerations shown. There will be some use of specialist terms, although they may not always be used appropriately.

Example answer for Band 2:

By ploughing the field this will bring up and turn over soil which is deeper down meaning that moisture and nutrients from lower in the soil structure would be brought up and any weeds will be ploughed in, as well as also breaking up the soil, also making the fields look smarter. Some disadvantages to this would be that it can be time consuming, meaning it would cost more too.

The other method which may be used is minimum cultivations. This would be good as it means you won't over cultivate the field which can cause the soil to be more compact, as well as being cheaper. But by doing minimum cultivations, this will also have some disadvantages. These include there being more weeds as a way in which to get rid of black grass. From looking at both choices, I would choose to plough as it breaks up the soil more and helps to control weeds.

Band 3 (9-12 marks)

Detailed and comprehensive discussion of advantages and disadvantages of both cultivation methods. Detailed justification with clear understanding of considerations shown. Specialist terms will be used correctly and appropriately.

Example answer for Band 3:

Ploughing has a lot of advantages when applied correctly. It can bury trash that is on the soil's surface. If ploughing after muck spreading, this can improve organic matter levels in the soil. If ploughing is used, it can help create a clean seed bed which is good for plant growth.

There are disadvantages to ploughing. It is very time consuming and uses a lot more fuel, therefore making it an expensive operation. It can also cause compaction can leave a plough pan under the soil, creating drainage problems. Minimum tillage cultivation much quicker than ploughing. Wide areas can be covered in a fraction of the time. Oil seed rape will still grow a good crop of drilled directly on to a wheat or barley stubble. The disadvantage to this is that it can cause compaction as only the top layer of soil is being used. This means that sometimes the crop will not be able to get a proper root down and this could kill the crop or drastically reduce yields. It also makes pest and weed control a lot more difficult as weed plants and seeds are never really dealt with. Due to the pros and cons of both of these methods, on a farm I would choose to use both but in rotation. This will save time and money and will also keep the soil structure at an acceptable standard. I would do 3 or 4 years of minimum cultivations, dependent on the condition of the soil, and then 1 or 2 years of deeper tillage and ploughing again depending on the soil conditions, with ploughing taking place more often on heavier soils.

Examination technique

Candidates with a good understanding of the subject being assessed can often lose marks in exams because they lack experience or confidence in exams or awareness of how to maximise the time available to get the most out of the exam. Here is some suggested guidance for areas that could be covered in advance to help learners improve exam performance.

Before the exam

Although candidates cannot plan the answers they will give in advance, exams for Technical qualifications do follow a common structure and format. In advance of taking the exam, candidates should:

- be familiar with the structure of the exam (ie number and type of questions).
- be aware of the amount of time they have in total to complete the exam.
- have a plan, based on the exam start and finish time for how long to spend on each question/section of the exam.
- be aware of how many marks are available for each question, how much they should expect to write for each question and allow most time for those questions which have the most marks available.

At the start of the exam session

At the start of the exam, candidates:

- should carefully read through the instructions before answering any questions.
- may find it helpful, where possible, to mark or highlight key information such as command words and number of marks available on the question paper.
- identify questions which require an extended written answer and those questions where all or part of the question may be answered by giving bullets, lists etc rather than full sentences.

Answering the questions

Candidates do not have to answer exam questions in any particular order. They may find it helpful to consider, for example:

- tackling first those questions which they find easiest. This should help them get into the 'flow' of the exam and help confidence by building up marks quickly and at the start of the exam.
- tackling the extended answer question at an early stage of the exam to make sure they spend sufficient time on it and do not run out of time at the end of the exam.

Candidates should avoid wasting time by repeating the question either in full or in part in their answer.

Candidates should **always** attempt every question, even questions where they may be less confident about the answer they are giving. Candidates should be discouraged however, from spending too long on any answer they are less sure about and providing answers that are longer and give more detail than should be necessary in the hope of picking up marks. This may mean they have less time to answer questions that they are better prepared to answer.

Extended answer questions

Before writing out in full their answer to extended questions, candidates may find it helpful to identify the key requirements of the question and jot down a brief plan or outline of how they will answer it. This will help clarify their thinking and make sure that they don't get 'bogged down' or provide too much detail for one part of the question at the expense of others.

Towards the end of the exam

Candidates should always set aside time at the end of the exam to read back through and review what they have written in order to make sure this is legible, makes sense and answers the question in full.

If a candidate finds they are running out of time to finish an answer towards the end of the exam, they should attempt to complete the answer in abbreviated or note form. Provided the content is clear and relevant, examiners will consider such answers and award marks where merited.

Further guidance on preparing candidates to take the exam is given in the City & Guilds publication, [Technical Qualifications, Teaching, Learning and Assessment](#) which can be downloaded free of charge from City & Guilds website.

4. Further information

For further information to support delivery and exam preparation for this qualification, centres should see:

City & Guilds

Qualification homepage: <http://www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/land-based-services/agriculture/0171-technical-in-agriculture-and-landbased-engineering#tab=information> which includes:

- Qualification handbook
- Synoptic Assignment
- Sample assessments

Technical Qualifications, Resources and Support: cityandguilds.com/techbac/technical-qualifications/resources-and-support

Joint Council for Qualifications

Instructions for Conducting Examinations: www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/jcq---instructions-for-conducting-examinations