

7908-501 – Level 3 in Plastering (Solid) – Theory Exam

March 2024

Examiner Report

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Introduction

This document has been prepared by the Chief 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 2024** examination series. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose, whether it was caused by a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique or responses that failed to demonstrate the required depth of understanding.

The document provides commentary on the following assessment:

7908-501 Level 3 Plastering (Solid) – Theory Exam.

Theory Exam – March 2024

Grade Boundaries and Distribution

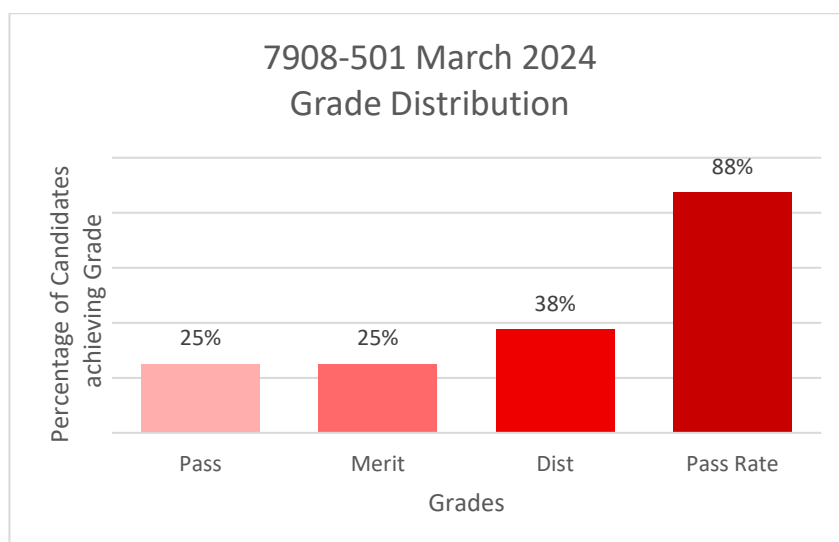
Assessment: **7908-501**

Series: **March 2024**

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

Total marks available	70
Pass mark	27
Merit mark	36
Distinction mark	46

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



Chief Examiner Commentary

General Comments on Candidate Performance

Assessment component: 7908-501

Series: March 2024

This was the fifth series of the Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Plastering (Solid) theory examination, with an increase in the overall achievement rate compared to March 2023.

The 7908-501 March 2024 question paper has been written to include a good range of questions covering Unit 301 Principles of construction and Unit 303 Internal solid plastering.

The question paper was comparable with previous series and responses were a significant improvement on the previous test series. Overall, performance was much stronger in recall compared to understanding. Some responses to questions that involved demonstrating AO2 understanding however were not fully justified.

Most candidates demonstrated a high level of recall across the learning outcomes. Candidates provided accurate responses to topics such as the use of performance plasterboard, the roles and responsibilities of professionals, health and safety documentation, building regulations, types of additives, background preparation and selecting types of beads. Candidates also provided responses that were above average when identifying types of limes, types of safety documents required to work on construction sites and methods to improve energy performance measures within a property. They also provided good responses to questions covering the role of a building inspector, the benefits of computer aided design (CAD) technology and identifying types of surface defects.

Most candidates struggled to provide responses to questions involving environmental materials used in construction, technical construction documents to identify materials and the benefit and use of power tools for mixing pre-blended plasters. Although candidates provided basic responses, they failed to provide explanations for topic areas such as the reason behind toolbox talks, the types and characteristics of backgrounds to receive three-coat work, the causes behind defective work and the issues that can cause delays in work programmes.

Candidates also found process questions particularly challenging. They failed to differentiate between solid plastering work and direct bond dry lining when looking at processes and techniques for installation. Likewise, responses to questions about the processes for plastering two-coat work to complex backgrounds did not perform well and only a minority gained marks in this area.

In terms of the extended response question (ERQ), the candidates were asked to provide a detailed account based on a plastering scenario. They were expected to explain how to renovate and restore solid plastering work to a room in a client's property containing masonry background walls with openings, as well as the removal and replacement of a plasterboard ceiling. Most candidates provided a comprehensive response and were awarded marks across the grade bands. Most of them provided detailed responses to pre-planning work which included protection measures and the importance of health and safety, including appropriate disposal of waste.

Higher marks were awarded to candidates that provided detailed justifications and elaborated on the entire process from the planning stage, which included the method of work for the renovation work. Most candidates however failed to explain the importance of beads prior to applying backing coats; in some cases, responses referred to dry lining and made no reference to removing and renewing the ceiling.

Overall, there was significant improvement in the quality of the responses than in the previous series.

Centres may need to look at further developing their understanding of learning outcome topics and are advised to revisit the handbook, schemes of learning and previous exam papers to fine tune the delivery of their programmes. They should also consult the sample paper to ensure they familiarise themselves with the question styles and responses; through this they can enable candidates to explain and describe methods and techniques in sufficient detail to demonstrate understanding.

Candidates would benefit from practising previous test papers to help them learn how to provide an explanation or justification of a process. When centres prepare learners for the extended response questions, centres should plan the structure of their responses to ensure candidates are aware of what to include.