



ICS Examiners Report

Port And Terminals

Overall Comments Guidelines

The overall standard for the Port and Terminal examination in November 2023 was of a more modest standard than in comparison to previous years. A number of students struggled with the question on Investment and economic appraisals and mis-interpreted the question on promotional tools which a marketing manager of a port would utilise. The operational management type of questions on grain handling terminals and ISPS codes and seabourn assets **gained improved responses from the students.**

Overall Comments

The questions were chosen from a wide range of subjects within the syllabus. Port equipment, Economic and Investment appraisal techniques, social media marketing, environmental issues, financial reporting, the ISPS code, and seagoing assets of ports.

Question One

Grain Cargo Handling Equipment

The question on the main cargo handling equipment expected to be found at a grain terminal was very well handled. The students who achieved the highest marks were able to discuss a number of different types of cargo loading equipment, storage facilities and conveyor belts to move the cargo from store to vessel.

Question Two:

Environmental issues

This was a new type of question which although may not have been specifically in the syllabus has become such an important issue for ports that it was not unreasonable to ask a question of this topic.

The question was well answered with a number of students able to offer good examples of where ports had introduced measures to reduce Co2 emissions. These would be the introduction of the use of electrical vehicles, the usage of solar panels, usage of wind energy, the reduction in the use of diesel or MGO for floating assets.

Question Three

The question on “specific facilities that your port can offer” to the cruise sector was poorly handled. Many students overlooked the basic concept of the terminal building and the importance of suitable space required for check in, baggage handling, passenger processing through security, safe access and egress from the vessel.

Many students focused on peripheral non-core services such as tours, hotels, casinos and overlooked the major core services.

Question Four

Financial reporting

This question was generally well handled by students who were able to display a good range of knowledge on profit and loss accounts, year-end statements and cash flow analysis. Many students would have gained additional marks by discussing budgets and forecasts.

Question Five

ISPS code

This question was generally well answered by the students who were able to offer some good examples of the success of the ISPS code such as the consistency of approach, improvements in ship and port security. Whilst in contrast students discussed the additional paperwork and cost, aligned to inconsistencies of approach in certain areas as the negative aspect of the the code.

Question Six

Seagoing Assets

The students were able to offer a number of credible examples here such as the obvious tugs, dredgers and pilot boats to the more obscure fire ships, pontoons and guard vessels.

The students who attempted this question tended to gain high marks.

Question Seven

Marketing

A modest answer to this question.

Many students tended to write a generic overview of the 4 Ps of marketing rather than focus on the specific marketing tools which are available to a marketing manager of a port such as websites, promotional tours, exhibitions, social media, business trips, brochures etc.

Question Eight

Economic and Investment Appraisal techniques

This was a questions students struggled with, many wrote vague, well-meaning answers with little understanding of the requirement to introduce an indication of contractual new business and risk within the economic appraisal and the various types of investment appraisal techniques which would be applied to such a potential investment.