



2014 ICS Examiner's Report

PORT AND TERMINAL MANAGEMENT (PTM)

General Comments:

The overall standard for the Port and Terminal examination in 2014 was very high. Students displayed a wide knowledge and understanding of the syllabus and could also bring working examples into their answers. Students did tend to struggle on questions covering financial aspects of port management and also Question 2 on the cruise liner industry caused some issues for students.

The questions were chosen from a wide range of subjects within the syllabus, including terminal equipment, operational management, health and safety, financial control, financial investments and port ownership models.

Question 1:

This was a well-answered question. Students were able to discuss delivery to the terminal by sea, road and rail. They discussed storage in silos close to the terminal, elevator facilities to move the cargo from store to ship's side, and a number of different loading techniques and equipment.

Some students also improved their answer with working examples from ports of their choice.

Question 2:

This was a question where the students struggled. The main issue was that students failed to discuss the actual terminal in enough depth. Too much time was spent in discussing the potential benefits to tourists from visiting the specific port. Students largely overlooked the fact that customs, immigration, police and port health would also be located in the terminal building. Overall the quality of answers was disappointing.

Question 3:

This question was reasonably well-answered with students being able to quote statute law such as the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA)*. They included the more practical day-to-day health and safety aspects that any employee working at the tanker terminal would expect to find in place. This would include, but not be limited to, safety clothing, safety meetings, safe working practices being documented, inductions, safety areas and lighting.

Question 4:

Generally students wrote in great depth about the implementation of the ISPS code. In particular they described the specific ports where they work. This part of the question was answered very well. Where students struggled was in displaying the ability to critically discuss the implantation of the ISPS code. Most students made the obvious comments that the code had improved safety at their ports. But few created a reasoned argument that may have shown that administration and costs have increased.

Question 5:

Students tended to either answer this question with an in-depth knowledge, where they could comfortably discuss the major investment appraisal techniques. Alternatively students tended to attempt this question as their fifth one, and approach it more from an entrepreneurial outlook, without the ability to introduce any actual appraisal techniques.

Question 6:

This question was answered very well by many students. Most that attempted this question were able to quote the numerous performance management ratios in depth. This was a very popular question for the students and a large percentage scored highly.

Question 7:

Students were able to answer this question with confidence. Most of them tended to choose private and public port ownership as their preferred options. They gave in-depth answers on the structure of port management, and also were able to introduce relevant examples of ports, which enhanced their answers.

Question 8:

This was a question which posed some problems for the students. The examiner was expecting to read comments on stricter debt-control policies, tighter control of finances and so on. But a significant percentage overlooked the question of financial risk and chose to base their answers on a sales or commercial development approach which was not what was required.