

The overall standard for the Port and Terminal examination in November 2025 was reasonable, with the majority of students achieving pass marks. Generally, students did well in demonstrating a broad knowledge of the synopsis and could also introduce working examples in their answers. However, students did seem to struggle with the question related to pricing and finances.

The questions were chosen from a wide range of subjects within the syllabus. Port equipment, port pricing, accounting controls, abbreviations, economic appraisals, abbreviations, health and safety and operational questions.

Question One: Crude oil terminal

This proved to be a challenging question for students; it was, in effect, a three-part question.

Berth and Navigation-This aspect was reasonably well handled. Most students could offer comments on the navigational and berth requirements relating to the terminal. However, many students provided incorrect dimensions for a VLCC, particularly regarding the vessel's required draft.

Discharge operations - This aspect was generally well managed, with most students able to describe chocks and manifold hoses.

Storage – This aspect was inadequately addressed, with students providing incorrect details about storage tanks and, in one instance, referring to the storage tanks as silos.

Question Two: Port Costings

This was a relatively new question which was within the syllabus. The question was not very popular among students, and the few who attempted it gave a variety of answers. Some students were able to discuss ship dues, pilotage, towage, port agency fees, ISPS, etc., whilst other students appeared to fail to understand the requirements of the question.

Question Three: Financial Performance Measurement

This was a new question which was within the syllabus. The students who attempted this did not fare well. Students mistook this for a question on profitability, and in all cases, they went on to discuss the PL and shareholder value as the main drivers, which was not the actual question.

Question Four: Abbreviations

Most students were comfortable with most abbreviations and could provide solid answers with examples. This was the case with MARPOL/SOLAS and AGV. Some students struggled with the concept of MIDAS ports and ILO.

Question Five Port Competition

The question on Port competition was well answered, with many being able to describe the four major examples of Port competition: Horizontal, Vertical, Segmented, and Aggregate. This was generally well handled, and the students who chose this question answered it extremely well and achieved high marks.

Question Six Financial Appraisals:

This question was well handled, and most students were able to provide good examples of the three main types of financial investment appraisals, namely: payback, net present value, and the net rate of return methods.

Students who achieved the highest marks were able to provide good examples of projects where the methods could be applied.

Question Seven: Health and Safety

This question was well handled, and many of the students who attempted this question scored highly. The majority of students were able to adequately discuss the main aspects, such as PPE, safety culture, toolbox talks, pollution training, cargo control systems, no-smoking areas, and training.

Unfortunately, many students did not recognise that the terminal is offshore, which introduces different health and safety considerations, such as lifejackets, lifebelts, alarms, immersion alarm systems, and the safety of any transfer vessels. This aspect was not adequately covered.

Question Eight: General Cargo equipment in a Breakbulk terminal

This question was a great opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge, and those who explored the key differences between a breakbulk general cargo terminal and a container terminal were rewarded with high marks. For future reference, strong answers included discussion of features such as the quay, cargo apronage, the different types of general cargo cranes, forklifts, weighbridges, and warehouses. If this was a challenging question, don't be discouraged — with a solid understanding of these terminal features, you'll be well-equipped to tackle similar questions with confidence going forward!