

IGCSE Coasts Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. Which coastal feature is primarily characterized by its ability to absorb storm surges?**
 - A. Rocks**
 - B. Dunes**
 - C. Mangroves**
 - D. Concrete jetties**

- 2. Which of the following best describes an ecosystem?**
 - A. A collection of human-made systems**
 - B. A community of organisms interacting with their environment**
 - C. A specific habitat for one species**
 - D. An area with chemical properties**

- 3. Which term describes a feature formed from the erosion of a former cliff face that is exposed at low tide?**
 - A. Coastal arch**
 - B. Wave cut platform**
 - C. Sea stack**
 - D. Stump**

- 4. Which structure is built at right angles to the beach to control erosion?**
 - A. Groynes**
 - B. Jetties**
 - C. Breakwaters**
 - D. Sea walls**

- 5. What is the name of the wall built on the edge of the coastline?**
 - A. Sea wall**
 - B. Coastal barrier**
 - C. Beach guard**
 - D. Shoreline fence**

6. Which process involves materials becoming smaller and rounder as they collide with each other in the sea?

- A. Attrition**
- B. Abrasion (Corrasion)**
- C. Solution (Corrosion)**
- D. Hydraulic action**

7. What factor influences the nature of a cliff?

- A. Height of the cliff**
- B. Type of rock and its hardness**
- C. Proximity to urban areas**
- D. Climate conditions**

8. Which process occurs when waves pick up and throw materials like pebbles against a cliff face?

- A. Abrasion (Corrasion)**
- B. Hydraulic action**
- C. Attrition**
- D. Solution (Corrosion)**

9. Which process is essential in the formation of beaches in bays?

- A. Deposition**
- B. Erosion**
- C. Abrasion**
- D. Hydraulic action**

10. Why are mangroves important in coastal protection?

- A. They provide food for coastal wildlife**
- B. They improve water quality**
- C. They protect shorelines from erosion and storm impacts**
- D. They are used for fishing activities**

Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. C

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Explanations

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1. Which coastal feature is primarily characterized by its ability to absorb storm surges?

- A. Rocks**
- B. Dunes**
- C. Mangroves**
- D. Concrete jetties**

The ability to absorb storm surges is primarily associated with mangroves, which are a type of coastal vegetation found in tropical and subtropical regions. Mangroves have unique adaptations that allow them to thrive in saline environments and unstable substrates. Their root systems are extensive and complex, providing both stabilization to the shoreline and a natural barrier against powerful waves and storm surges. During storm events, the dense network of mangrove roots helps to dissipate wave energy and reduce the impact of flooding in coastal areas. Additionally, the elevated land created by mangrove systems can provide further protection to inland areas from rising water levels. By absorbing and slowing down the energy of incoming water, mangroves significantly mitigate the effects of storms, safeguarding both the coastal ecosystem and human infrastructure. Other coastal features like rocks, dunes, and concrete jetties also serve various functions in coastal protection, but they do not provide the same level of natural absorption and mitigation against storm surges as mangroves do. Rocks can act as barriers but do not absorb energy in the same way. Dunes can help reduce flooding, but their effectiveness is limited compared to the deep, resistant roots of mangroves. Concrete jetties are hard structures designed to manage water flow and protect

2. Which of the following best describes an ecosystem?

- A. A collection of human-made systems**
- B. A community of organisms interacting with their environment**
- C. A specific habitat for one species**
- D. An area with chemical properties**

An ecosystem is best described as a community of organisms interacting with their environment. This definition encapsulates the complex relationships between living organisms—such as plants, animals, and microorganisms—and their physical surroundings, including soil, water, and climate. In an ecosystem, different species coexist, contribute to biological diversity, and play various roles such as producers, consumers, and decomposers. The interactions within an ecosystem, including food chains, nutrient cycles, and symbiotic relationships, are crucial for maintaining the balance and health of the environment. This interdependence highlights how organisms rely on one another and their surroundings for survival, reproduction, and overall ecosystem functionality. Other options describe elements that do not comprehensively capture the essence of an ecosystem. For instance, a collection of human-made systems does not relate to natural interactions among organisms. A specific habitat for one species may describe an ecological niche, but it lacks the community aspect present in a true ecosystem. Lastly, an area defined merely by its chemical properties overlooks the biological components and interactions that are fundamental to the definition of an ecosystem.

3. Which term describes a feature formed from the erosion of a former cliff face that is exposed at low tide?

- A. Coastal arch**
- B. Wave cut platform**
- C. Sea stack**
- D. Stump**

The term that describes a feature formed from the erosion of a former cliff face, which is exposed at low tide, is a wave cut platform. This feature occurs when waves erode the base of a cliff, leading to the development of a flat, bench-like area at the water's edge. As erosion continues, the cliff above becomes undermined and eventually collapses, resulting in the exposure of this platform at low tide. Wave cut platforms provide valuable insight into coastal processes and the interaction between land and sea. They are often characterized by a gradual slope leading from the cliff base out to the water, and their formation is evidence of the ongoing processes of erosion and sediment transport along the coastline. While other terms such as coastal arch, sea stack, and stump relate to specific coastal landforms resulting from erosion or other geological processes, they do not accurately describe the flat surface exposed at low tide that is created by the continuous erosion of a cliff face. Coastal arches and sea stacks typically involve more complex erosion processes leading to distinct shapes, while stumps are the remnants of eroded sea stacks.

4. Which structure is built at right angles to the beach to control erosion?

- A. Groynes**
- B. Jetties**
- C. Breakwaters**
- D. Sea walls**

The structure that is built at right angles to the beach to control erosion is groynes. Groynes are constructed typically out of wood, stone, or concrete, and they extend from the beach into the sea. Their primary purpose is to interrupt the flow of sediment along the coast, which can help to reduce sediment loss from a beach and promote beach accretion. By trapping sand moving within the littoral drift, groynes can help to maintain and even widen beaches, thereby reducing the impact of wave action on coastal erosion. Understanding the function of groynes is essential, as they can effectively mitigate erosion while also having secondary effects on adjacent areas of the beach, sometimes leading to variations in sediment distribution. Other structures, while aimed at coastal protection, operate differently; for example, jetties are used to protect navigation channels, breakwaters provide sheltered waters, and sea walls act as barriers against wave action but do not extend perpendicular to the beach like groynes do.

5. What is the name of the wall built on the edge of the coastline?

- A. Sea wall**
- B. Coastal barrier**
- C. Beach guard**
- D. Shoreline fence**

The wall built on the edge of the coastline is known as a sea wall. This structure is specifically designed to protect the coast from the effects of wave action and erosion. By absorbing and reflecting the energy of waves, sea walls help maintain the integrity of the shoreline and prevent flooding in coastal areas. They are often constructed using concrete or rock and can be found in many coastal cities around the world. Their primary purpose is to provide a barrier against the forces of the sea, making them integral to coastal management strategies aimed at protecting vulnerable areas.

6. Which process involves materials becoming smaller and rounder as they collide with each other in the sea?

- A. Attrition**
- B. Abrasion (Corrasion)**
- C. Solution (Corrosion)**
- D. Hydraulic action**

Attrition is the process where materials, such as pebbles and sand, undergo wear and tear from colliding with each other in the sea. This constant movement in the water causes the edges of these materials to chip away, leading to a gradual reduction in size and making them rounder over time. In coastal environments, this process is significant as it contributes to the overall shaping and smoothing of sediment. As these particles collide during wave action, they lose sharp edges and transitions towards a more rounded form. This is essential for understanding sediment transport and the evolution of coastal landscapes, as rounded materials can be easily transported by water currents. The other processes listed, while related to erosion and sediment movement, do not specifically describe the action of materials colliding with each other to become smaller and rounder.

7. What factor influences the nature of a cliff?

- A. Height of the cliff**
- B. Type of rock and its hardness**
- C. Proximity to urban areas**
- D. Climate conditions**

The nature of a cliff is significantly influenced by the type of rock and its hardness. Different types of rock exhibit varying levels of resistance to weathering and erosion, which directly affects the cliff's structure, stability, and appearance. For instance, hard rocks such as granite or basalt typically create steep, rugged cliffs due to their strong resistance to erosive forces, while softer rocks like sandstone or clay are more prone to erosion, resulting in less steep, more gradual slopes. The composition and geological characteristics of the rock dictate how the cliff will weather over time and what kind of features, such as overhangs or sheer faces, will develop. Overall, the hardness and type of rock are fundamental components in determining the overall profile and stability of a cliff, making this factor crucial in understanding coastal geology. Other factors, such as the height of the cliff, proximity to urban areas, and climate conditions, do have impacts on various coastal processes, but they do not fundamentally alter the inherent characteristics of the cliff itself as the rock type does.

8. Which process occurs when waves pick up and throw materials like pebbles against a cliff face?

- A. Abrasion (Corrasion)**
- B. Hydraulic action**
- C. Attrition**
- D. Solution (Corrosion)**

The process being described is known as abrasion, also referred to as corrasion. This occurs when the energy of waves causes sediment, such as pebbles and sand, to be picked up and then hurled against a cliff face or rock surface. As these materials collide with the rock, they wear it down, effectively eroding it over time. This mechanical weathering leads to the eventual smoothing and sculpting of coastal features. Abrasion is particularly significant in coastal environments, where the constant wave action provides the necessary force for the materials to strike the rock repeatedly. This process contributes to the formation of various coastal landforms, such as wave-cut platforms and cliffs. The effectiveness of abrasion depends on factors such as wave energy, the type of materials involved, and the geological characteristics of the coastal rock. Understanding this process highlights the dynamic nature of coastal ecosystems and how mechanical forces shape the landscape. Other processes, such as hydraulic action, attrition, and solution, do not involve the same mechanics of scraping and wearing down surfaces through the direct impact of materials being thrown against them.

9. Which process is essential in the formation of beaches in bays?

- A. Deposition**
- B. Erosion**
- C. Abrasion**
- D. Hydraulic action**

The formation of beaches in bays is primarily driven by the process of deposition. This occurs when sediments, such as sand and gravel, are transported by waves and currents and eventually settle along the shoreline. In a bay, the calm waters often allow finer materials to be deposited, creating a sandy beach. The shape and features of the bay can further influence how wave energy is dissipated, which enhances the deposition process. In contrast, erosion, abrasion, and hydraulic action are primarily associated with the wearing away of landforms rather than the accumulation that creates beaches. Erosion tends to remove material from shores and cliffs, while abrasion involves the grinding action of sediment against rock surfaces. Hydraulic action refers to the force of water impacting rock, leading to their fracturing and erosion. These processes do not contribute to beach formation in the same constructive way that deposition does.

10. Why are mangroves important in coastal protection?

- A. They provide food for coastal wildlife**
- B. They improve water quality**
- C. They protect shorelines from erosion and storm impacts**
- D. They are used for fishing activities**

Mangroves play a crucial role in coastal protection primarily by safeguarding shorelines from erosion and mitigating the impacts of storms. Their extensive root systems stabilize sediments, reducing the rate at which sediment is washed away by waves and currents. This stabilization is essential in maintaining the integrity of coastal landforms and preventing loss of habitat. Additionally, mangroves act as a natural barrier against storm surges, which can be particularly destructive during hurricanes and typhoons. By absorbing wave energy and acting as a buffer, they help to protect inland areas from flooding and the force of incoming waves. This function is especially important in areas where development has occurred, as natural protective barriers have been compromised. While mangroves do provide food for wildlife, contribute to water quality, and support fishing activities, their primary significance in coastal ecosystems lies in their unique ability to protect coastlines from erosion and storm damage. This protective function is vital for maintaining healthy coastal environments and supporting human communities that depend on stable coastlines.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://igcsecoasts.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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