Formal and Informal Register – Test 1

Name: Class: Date: Score: / 30

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Choose the best option (A, B, C or D) for each question.

Part 1: Choosing formal vocabulary

Each sentence comes from a formal text. Choose the word or phrase that best fits the gap in a formal register.

1. The company intends to _____ 200 new staff over the next financial year.
   A take on **B** rope in **C** recruit **D** get hold of
2. We regret to inform you that your application has been _____.
   A knocked back **B** declined **C** binned **D** given the elbow
3. Visitors are kindly requested to _____ from smoking anywhere in the building.
   A stop **B** quit **C** lay off **D** refrain
4. The new regulations will _____ on 1 March.
   A come into effect **B** kick in **C** get going **D** start up
5. Should you _____ any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.
   A fancy **B** be after **C** require **D** be needing
6. The results of the study _____ that further research is needed.
   A go to show **B** indicate **C** sort of show **D** point out
7. The scheme provides free school meals for _____ from low-income families.
   A kids **B** little ones **C** nippers **D** children
8. Ticket holders are _____ to arrive thirty minutes before the performance begins.
   A advised **B** told off **C** reckoned **D** got
9. Full payment must be made _____ to the start of the course.
   A ahead **B** previous **C** prior **D** earlier
10. Unfortunately, the hotel was unable to _____ our request for a later check-out.
    A sort **B** fix up **C** wangle **D** accommodate

Part 2: Recognising and using register

Choose the option that best answers each question about formal and informal language.

11. Which message would be most natural in a text to a close friend?
    A I'm afraid I am unable to attend this evening.
    B Sorry, can't make it tonight!
    C I regret that I shall not be present this evening.
    D Please accept my apologies for my absence tonight.

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12. Which phrase is closest in meaning to 'ascertain' in this sentence? 'We need to ascertain whether the figures are accurate.'
A make sure **B** find out **C** figure in **D** give out

13. Which word is too informal for an academic essay? 'The data suggest that the policy had a pretty significant impact on employment rates.'
A data **B** suggest **C** pretty **D** impact

14. Which part of this email is inappropriate for its register? 'Dear Mr Lindqvist, Further to our conversation, I am enclosing the documents you requested. Cheers, Amira'
A Further to **B** enclosing **C** requested **D** Cheers

15. Which informal phrasal verb has the same meaning as the formal verb in this sentence? 'The police are investigating the incident.'
A looking after **B** looking into **C** looking up to **D** looking over

16. Which sentence would be most appropriate in a formal letter of complaint?
A I wish to express my dissatisfaction with the service I received.
B I'm totally fed up with your rubbish service.
C Your service really gets on my nerves.
D Honestly, the service was a bit of a joke.

17. 'Can you give me a heads-up if the meeting is moved?' In this sentence, 'a heads-up' means:
A a promotion **B** a compliment
C advance warning **D** a reminder afterwards

18. 'I'm totally snowed under at the moment.' Which formal sentence has the same meaning?
A I am feeling rather unwell at present.
B I am currently unavailable due to the weather.
C I am somewhat confused at present.
D I have an exceptionally heavy workload at present.

19. A colleague you are friendly with asks: 'Fancy grabbing a bite after work?' Which reply is most natural?
A I should be delighted to accept your kind invitation.
B Your proposal is hereby accepted.
C Yeah, sounds good!
D I acknowledge receipt of your request.

20. A _____ number of participants withdrew from the study before it was completed.
A considerable **B** whopping **C** hefty **D** ton of

Part 3: Formal correspondence - collocations and word families

Read the email and choose the best option for each numbered gap (21-30).

Dear Dr Haddad,

Thank you for registering for the International Conference on Urban Sustainability. We are writing to (21) ___ receipt of your registration and payment.

Please find (22) ___ the provisional programme. We would be grateful if you could (23) ___ your attendance at the welcome reception by 15 May. (24) ___ to the high level of interest, places at the evening workshops are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Delegates who require (25) ___ are advised to book directly with one of our partner hotels, details of which are available on the conference website. Please note that the organisers cannot accept (26) ___ for the loss of personal belongings during the event.

Should you have any dietary requirements or accessibility needs, kindly (27) ___ the registration team at your earliest (28) ___. We will make every effort to (29) ___ your needs.

We look forward to welcoming you in June.

Yours (30) ___,

Elena Moreau

Conference Coordinator

21. (21) We are writing to _____ receipt of your registration and payment.
A admit **B** acknowledge **C** accept **D** recognise

22. (22) Please find _____ the provisional programme.
A affixed **B** adhered **C** attached **D** joined

23. (23) We would be grateful if you could _____ your attendance at the welcome reception by 15 May.
A confirm **B** assure **C** ensure **D** affirm

24. (24) _____ to the high level of interest, places at the evening workshops are limited.
A Because **B** Since **C** Resulting **D** Owing

25. (25) Delegates who require _____ are advised to book directly with one of our partner hotels.
A accommodating **B** accommodation **C** accommodate **D** accommodated

26. (26) Please note that the organisers cannot accept _____ for the loss of personal belongings.
A responsible **B** responsiveness **C** responsibly **D** responsibility

27. (27) Kindly _____ the registration team at your earliest convenience.
A contact with **B** get in touch **C** contact **D** reach out

28. (28) Kindly contact the registration team at your earliest _____.
A convenience **B** convenient **C** conveniently **D** convene

29. (29) We will make every effort to _____ your needs.
A reach **B** meet **C** do **D** make

30. (30) Yours _____, (letter to Dr Haddad)
A faithfully **B** regards **C** sincerely **D** best

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Answer key – Formal and Informal Register – Test 1

1 C	2 B	3 D	4 A	5 C	6 B	7 D	8 A	9 C	10 D
11 B	12 B	13 C	14 D	15 B	16 A	17 C	18 D	19 C	20 A
21 B	22 C	23 A	24 D	25 B	26 D	27 C	28 A	29 B	30 C

Explanations

1. **C** – 'Recruit' is the formal verb for hiring staff; the other options are informal or colloquial.
2. **B** – 'Declined' is the standard formal word for rejecting an application; the others are slang.
3. **D** – 'Refrain from' is the formal collocation; 'stop' and 'quit' are not followed by 'from' in this sense, and 'lay off' is informal.
4. **A** – 'Come into effect' is the formal expression for laws or rules starting to apply; 'kick in' is informal.
5. **C** – 'Require' fits the formal inverted conditional; 'fancy' and 'be after' are colloquial, and 'be needing' is unnatural here.
6. **B** – 'Indicate' is the precise formal verb for what data shows; 'point out' is used for people, not results.
7. **D** – 'Children' is the neutral, formal word; the other options are informal.
8. **A** – 'Are advised to' is the formal way of giving a recommendation in official notices.
9. **C** – 'Prior to' is the formal equivalent of 'before'; the other words do not combine with 'to' in this way.
10. **D** – 'Accommodate a request' is the formal collocation meaning to satisfy it.
11. **B** – A text to a friend calls for short, informal language such as 'can't make it'.
12. **B** – 'Ascertain' means to find out for certain, and 'find out whether' fits the sentence.
13. **C** – 'Pretty' as an intensifier is informal; an essay would use 'fairly' or 'highly'.
14. **D** – 'Cheers' is an informal sign-off that clashes with the formal tone of the rest of the email.
15. **B** – 'Look into' means to investigate; the other phrasal verbs have different meanings.
16. **A** – 'I wish to express my dissatisfaction' is polite, formal and impersonal, as a complaint letter requires.
17. **C** – 'A heads-up' is an informal expression for advance warning or notice.
18. **D** – 'Snowed under' is an informal idiom meaning to have too much work.
19. **C** – A casual invitation calls for a casual reply; the other options are far too formal.
20. **A** – 'A considerable number of' is the formal way to say 'a lot of'; 'whopping' is informal and the others do not collocate.
21. **B** – 'Acknowledge receipt' is a fixed formal collocation used to confirm that something has arrived.
22. **C** – 'Please find attached' is the standard formal phrase for a file sent with an email.
23. **A** – 'Confirm your attendance' is the natural collocation meaning to state definitely that you will come.
24. **D** – 'Owing to' is a formal preposition meaning 'because of'; 'because' and 'since' cannot be followed by 'to'.
25. **B** – A noun is needed after 'require', and 'accommodation' is the noun meaning a place to stay.
26. **D** – 'Accept responsibility for' needs the noun 'responsibility'.
27. **C** – 'Contact' takes a direct object; 'get in touch' and 'reach out' would need 'with' and 'to'.
28. **A** – 'At your earliest convenience' is a fixed formal phrase that requires the noun form.
29. **B** – 'Meet someone's needs' is the correct collocation meaning to satisfy them.
30. **C** – When the recipient is addressed by name, a formal letter ends with 'Yours sincerely'.

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Notes for teachers: Use this test after work on email and report writing, or as a diagnostic before a formal writing task. It targets common C1 errors: phrasal verbs and slang in formal texts, overly stiff language in casual contexts, wrong dependent prepositions (refrain from, prior to), and confusion within word families (responsible/responsibility, convenient/convenience). As a follow-up, ask students to rewrite the Part 3 email as an informal message to a friend, then compare the vocabulary they chose.

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