Formal and Informal Register – Worksheet 1

Name: Class: Date: Score: / 40

Do this worksheet online and check your answers instantly

Exercise 1: Formal equivalents

Match each informal word or phrase with its formal equivalent from the box. There are two extra words you do not need.

Example: finish (a contract) → terminate

WORD BOX

commence **assist** **require** **postpone** **sufficient** **reside** **obtain** **enquire** **terminate** **endeavour**

1. start (the meeting) → _____
2. help (a customer) → _____
3. need (more information) → _____
4. put off (the event) → _____
5. enough (funds) → _____
6. live (in the area) → _____
7. get (a visa) → _____
8. ask (about a vacancy) → _____

Exercise 2: Formal email phrases

Complete the sentences from formal emails with words from the box. There are two extra words you do not need.

Example: Yours ___ (ending an email to a named person) → sincerely

WORD BOX

regarding **hesitate** **inconvenience** **forward** **convenience** **prior** **attached** **grateful** **notwithstanding** **henceforth**

9. I am writing _____ your advertisement in Tuesday's newspaper.
10. Please do not _____ to contact me should you require further information.
11. We apologise for any _____ this delay may cause.
12. I look _____ to hearing from you.
13. Please reply at your earliest _____.

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14. All participants must register _____ to the event.
15. Please find _____ the documents you requested.
16. I would be _____ if you could send me further details.

Exercise 3: Make it formal

Rewrite each informal sentence in a formal register using the word in brackets. Keep the meaning the same.

Example: Tell us what you think. (FEEDBACK) → Please give us your feedback.

17. Can you tell me when the course starts? (WONDERING)

18. We've put off the meeting until next week. (POSTPONED)

19. You can't smoke in the building. (PERMITTED)

20. Sorry about the delay. (APOLOGISE)

21. Thanks for your help. (GRATEFUL)

22. They need to fill in the form by Friday. (REQUIRED)

23. Lots of people came to the talk. (NUMBER)

24. Get in touch with us if you have any questions. (CONTACT)

Exercise 4: Collocations in formal English

Each sentence contains one mistake. Write the corrected sentence.

Example: She is responsible of the budget. → She is responsible for the budget.

25. We would like to do an enquiry about your prices.

26. Applicants must comply to all safety regulations.

27. Please refrain to using mobile phones during the performance.

28. The hotel is in close proximity of the station.

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29. I would be grateful if you would provide me further details.

30. Further from our conversation yesterday, I am attaching the contract.

31. The new policy will come into affect on 1 March.

32. Customers are kindly requested to adhere with the guidelines.

Exercise 5: Word formation

Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits the gap.

Example: Your ___ is greatly appreciated. (PATIENT) → patience

33. Thank you for your _____ in this matter. (ASSIST)
34. Attendance at the training session is _____ for all staff. (COMPEL)
35. Your _____ for the conference has been confirmed. (REGISTER)
36. Please accept our sincere _____ for the error. (APOLOGISE)
37. Such behaviour is completely _____ in a professional environment. (ACCEPT)
38. The _____ of the new system will take place next month. (IMPLEMENT)
39. Visitors must show proof of _____ at reception. (IDENTIFY)
40. The proposal was approved _____ by the board. (UNANIMOUS)

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Answer key – Formal and Informal Register – Worksheet 1

Exercise 1: Formal equivalents

1. **commence**
   'Commence' is a formal verb meaning 'start' or 'begin'.
2. **assist**
   'Assist' is the formal equivalent of 'help'.
3. **require**
   'Require' is a formal way of saying 'need'.
4. **postpone**
   'Postpone' is the formal one-word equivalent of the phrasal verb 'put off'.
5. **sufficient**
   'Sufficient' is a formal adjective meaning 'enough'.
6. **reside**
   'Reside' is a formal verb meaning 'live', often used in official documents.
7. **obtain**
   'Obtain' is the formal equivalent of 'get' when it means 'acquire'.
8. **enquire**
   'Enquire' (about something) is the formal way of saying 'ask about'.

Exercise 2: Formal email phrases

9. **regarding**
   'Regarding' is a formal way of saying 'about'.
10. **hesitate**
    'Please do not hesitate to contact me' is a fixed formal phrase.
11. **inconvenience**
    'Apologise for any inconvenience' is a standard formal apology.
12. **forward**
    'Look forward to + -ing' is a fixed phrase used to close formal letters.
13. **convenience**
    'At your earliest convenience' means 'as soon as you can' in formal English.
14. **prior**
    'Prior to' is a formal way of saying 'before'.
15. **attached**
    'Please find attached' is the standard formal phrase for sending files by email.
16. **grateful**
    'I would be grateful if you could...' is a polite formal request.

Exercise 3: Make it formal

17. **I was wondering if you could tell me when the course starts.**
    'I was wondering if/whether you could...' turns a direct question into a polite indirect one, so the word order becomes statement order ('when the course starts'), and 'starts', 'begins' or the more formal 'commences' are all correct.
18. **The meeting has been postponed until next week.**
    'Postpone' replaces the phrasal verb, and the passive is common in formal notices.
19. **Smoking is not permitted in the building.**
    Formal notices often use an impersonal subject with 'is not permitted'.
20. **We apologise for the delay.**
    The formal verb is 'apologise for + noun', so 'We/I apologise for the delay' replaces the casual 'Sorry about'; 'would like to apologise', adding 'sincerely', and the spelling 'apologize' are all correct too.
21. **I am grateful for your help.**
    The adjective 'grateful' is followed by 'for + noun', so 'I am (very) grateful for your help' is a formal way of saying 'Thanks', and 'assistance' is an even more formal synonym for 'help'.
22. **They are required to fill in the form by Friday.**
    'Be required to + infinitive' is the formal equivalent of 'need to', so 'They are required to fill in the form' keeps the meaning, and 'fill out' or the more formal 'complete' work equally well.
23. **A large number of people attended the talk.**
    'A large number of' or 'a great number of' is the formal equivalent of 'lots of' with countable nouns like 'people', and 'attended' is a more formal choice than 'came to'.
24. **Please contact us if you have any questions.**
    'Contact' is the formal verb for 'get in touch with', and polite formulas such as 'Please do not hesitate to contact us' or the inverted conditional 'should you have any questions' make the sentence even more formal.

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Exercise 4: Collocations in formal English

25. **We would like to make an enquiry about your prices.**
    The correct collocation is 'make an enquiry'.
26. **Applicants must comply with all safety regulations.**
    'Comply' is followed by the preposition 'with'.
27. **Please refrain from using mobile phones during the performance.**
    'Refrain' is followed by 'from + -ing'.
28. **The hotel is in close proximity to the station.**
    The fixed phrase is 'in close proximity to'.
29. **I would be grateful if you would provide me with further details.**
    In British English 'provide' needs 'with' before the thing given: 'provide someone with something'.
30. **Further to our conversation yesterday, I am attaching the contract.**
    The formal linking phrase is 'further to', meaning 'following'.
31. **The new policy will come into effect on 1 March.**
    'Effect' is the noun; the fixed phrase is 'come into effect'.
32. **Customers are kindly requested to adhere to the guidelines.**
    'Adhere' is followed by the preposition 'to'.

Exercise 5: Word formation

33. **assistance**
    A noun is needed after 'your'; 'assist' becomes 'assistance'.
34. **compulsory**
    An adjective meaning 'required by rules' is needed: 'compulsory'.
35. **registration**
    A noun is needed as the subject; 'register' becomes 'registration'.
36. **apologies**
    'Please accept our apologies' uses the plural noun form.
37. **unacceptable**
    The context is negative, so a negative adjective is needed: 'unacceptable'.
38. **implementation**
    A noun is needed after 'the'; 'implement' becomes 'implementation'.
39. **identity**
    A noun is needed after 'proof of'; both 'identity' and 'identification' are used.
40. **unanimously**
    An adverb is needed to describe how it was approved: 'unanimously'.

Notes for teachers: Start with Exercise 1 as a warm-up and ask students where they would see each formal word, such as in letters, notices or reports. Common mistakes include wrong prepositions (comply to, refrain to, adhere with) and mixing registers within one text, for example 'Dear Sir' followed by 'Thanks a lot'. As a follow-up, give pairs a short informal email and ask them to rewrite it as a formal complaint or enquiry using at least six target expressions.

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