

## 1) FORMAL WRITING (Reports and proposals)

### Introduction

- The main purpose/aim of (this report) is to outline/ present / discuss / examine / evaluate...
- This report (outlines/looks at)...
- This report is based on...

### Making recommendations and concluding

- It is clear from customer feedback that...
- With regard to..., the general view seems to be...
- In the light of (this year's experience),...
- Perhaps the most effective way of...
- If the (centre) is to attract more customers, it is vital that...
- It would be a good idea to...
- It is (therefore) believed / obvious that...would be ideal for...
- It would (not) be advisable / practical to...
- We suggest/propose that...
- We suggest/propose + *ing*
- A (more spacious area) would be the solution.../ an effective way of...

### Generalising

- On the whole,...
- In general,...

- In light of the above, we believe the following measures should be adopted...
- In the short/long term, we suggest you should consider...
- My recommendations are as follows:...
- In my view, in future, we should...
- To improve the situation, we recommend...
- It is recommended that...
- To sum up,...To conclude,...
- I hope that the plan outlined/presented in this report meets with your approval...
- I hope that the recommendations outlined/ presented in this report will receive your serious consideration.

### Style

- Do not use contractions.
- Use passive forms whenever possible.
- Use relative clauses to join ideas: *The period during which he lived was full of uncertainty.*
- Use these formal words: ~~like~~ → such as / ~~kids~~ → children
  - ~~a lot (of)~~ → many / a large number of + countable noun
  - ~~a lot (of)~~ → much / a great amount of / a great deal of + uncountable
  - ~~a lot~~ (intensity) → very much / significantly / dramatically
- Avoid using the word *things / something*, etc. Use a more specific word (*problems, situation, solutions, subjects*, and so on).

## 2) SEMI-FORMAL WRITING

### Addressing the reader

- Have you ever wondered (what the college would be like if)....? If the answer is (yes)...., you...
- If you want a different kind of experience,... / As you know,...
- Doesn't it just make everyone feel (positive about...)?
- If you have a few hours to spare,...is worth seeing.

### Describing location

- Located / Situated (just a few miles away from...), X is...
- Built (just next to...), X is...
- Some minutes from..., X is...

### Giving information

- Throughout its history, X...
- X is by far the oldest...
- Y is the best known...
- What is particularly spectacular is...
- Recent additions/changes include...

### Giving your opinion

- X is intended for young(er) people...
- X is popular with (children)...
- In fact, (NEGATIVE OPINION)
- It's clearly been a good idea to...

### Giving practical information

- Anyone wishing to (apply)....can/should...
- (We) participate in.../organise.../run...
- (The club) offers/provides a range of (competitive matches for)...
- One of the most popular (features of our club is)...
- Members have the opportunity to.../...are able to

## Accuracy

- Never omit the subject pronoun: *Many people believe **IT** is important to... I believe **IT** is a good idea study...*
- Do not use unnecessary subject pronouns: *This is a problem which ~~it~~ is essential to solve.*
- Make sure the subject and the verb agree: *Attracting tourists involves improving local facilities.*  
(SINGULAR SUBJECT → attracting tourists + SINGULAR VERB → involves)

## Attitude clauses and phrases

Generally speaking,...  
Annoyingly,... Naturally,... Strangely,... Surprisingly,... Evidently,...  
Indeed,... In fact,... Admittedly,... Presumably,...

. . . . .

## RELATED WORDS AND PHRASES

### AGREEMENT

- A great number of people share the view that tourism will have a negative impact on the island.
- Today there is general / widespread agreement that pollution from cars and planes is threatening the future of our planet.
- It is now widely accepted that the universe began with the so-called 'big bang'.

### DISAGREEMENT

- Opinions differ about the proper relationship between the mass media and society.
- There is considerable disagreement among experts about the usefulness of these tests.
- There has been a great deal of controversy over abortion in the US.

### ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

- Regular exercise has many benefits, including reducing the risk of heart disease.
- Despite a few problems with the design, the car's advantages clearly outweigh its disadvantages.
- The major drawback of this method is that it can be very time-consuming.
- The downside of running your own business is that you are responsible if anything goes wrong.

### CAUSE

- lead to: The research could lead to a cure for many serious illnesses.
- result in: The fire resulted in damage to their property.
- be responsible for: He was responsible for the accident.
- bring about: The war brought about enormous social change.
- give rise to: Poor performance in exams can give rise to depression and even thoughts of suicide.
- trigger: to make something suddenly start to happen, especially a bad situation such as a crisis or a war, or a medical condition: Certain foods can trigger allergies.
- contribute to: Passive smoking could contribute to the development of respiratory diseases among nonsmokers.
- factor: Cost is often the deciding factor when choosing any product.

### EFFECT

- impact on: His work has had an enormous impact on the study of genetics.
- influence on: In his book, he examines the influence of the media on our society.
- affect: (v) The disease affects women more than men.
- influence: (v) She has influenced him a lot.
- implications: The results of the study could have important implications for future educational policy.

### EMPHASIZING

- I would like to stress that the research is still at an early stage.
- It should be noted that there are a number of alternative methods available.
- It is worth bearing in mind that 90% of the scientists researching herbicides in the US are employed by chemical companies.

- Factors such as temperature and acidity play a crucial role in determining how well the process works.
- These insects play a vital part in the food chain.
- It is essential that the work is carried out as soon as possible.
- The climate is much colder, especially in the far north.

## PROBLEMS

- issue: Issue is used especially about problems that affect a lot of people in society: International terrorism is the biggest issue (=the most important issue) facing the world today. Previous governments failed to address (=try to deal with) social issues such as unemployment and homelessness.
- challenge: something difficult that you must do or deal with, which needs a lot of skill, effort, and determination: She said she was looking forward to the challenge of starting up a new business on her own.
- difficulty: The company has managed to overcome (=deal with) its recent financial difficulties. Many people experience difficulty in sleeping at some time in their lives.
- trouble: a problem or several problems that make something difficult, spoil your plans etc: Students of English often have trouble with phrasal verbs. The company ran into trouble (=started to have problems) when it tried to expand too quickly.
- setback: something that happens which stops you making progress or which makes things worse than they were before: Despite some early setbacks, his campaign for the presidency was successful.
- obstacle: Criminal gangs are the biggest obstacle to democratic reform.
- dilemma: The doctors were faced with a moral dilemma.
- vicious circle: Some developing countries get caught in a vicious circle. They cannot afford to pay their debt repayments, and so the debts get even bigger.
- complication

## INCREASE

- increase by (percent): Last year, the number of burglaries increased by 15 percent.
- go up: Last month unemployment went up from 1.6 million to just over 1.7 million.
- grow: The volume of traffic on our roads continues to grow.
- expand: After two years of no growth, the economy started to expand again in 2003.
- double/triple/quadruple: Since 1950, the number of people dying from cancer has almost doubled.
- growth: (n) There has been a huge growth in sales of big 4-wheel-drive vehicles.

## DECREASE

- decrease by (percent): The average rainfall has decreased by around 30 percent.
- go down: The percentage of fat in our diets has gone down.
- fall: The number of tigers in the wild has fallen to just over 10,000.
- drop: At night, the temperature drops to minus 20 degrees.
- decline: decline is used about numbers or amounts, and also about the level or standard of something: In rural areas, the standard of living continued to decline.

## ADMIRE

- respect / look up to: The children need someone they can look up to.
- think highly of: Most of the students and staff think very highly of Dr. Smith.
- have a high opinion of
- highly regarded/respected: a highly respected surgeon

## ADVANCED

- sophisticated / high-tech (equipment) / state-of-the-art (technology)

## SURPRISING (Avoid using "colourful" vocabulary in formal writing!)

- amazing / unbelievable / incredible / astonishing / staggering
- come as a surprise / come as a shock / amaze / astonish

**SURPRISED** (Avoid using "colourful" vocabulary in formal writing!)

-amazed / astonished / speechless / be taken aback (He was taken aback by the news)

**EXCITING** (Avoid using "colourful" vocabulary in formal writing!)

-thrilling / gripping / exhilarating / action-packed

**BORING**

-dull / tedious / monotonous / uninspiring

**BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE** (Avoid using "colourful" vocabulary in formal writing!)

-attractive / good-looking / gorgeous / striking / stunning

**BEAUTIFUL PLACES** (Avoid using "colourful" vocabulary in formal writing!)

-breathhtaking / stunning / awe-inspiring / striking / spectacular

-spotless: very clean

**UGLY PLACES / PEOPLE** (Avoid using "colourful" vocabulary in formal writing!)

-unattractive / unpleasant / unsightly / hideous (=extremely ugly)

-filthy: very dirty

**IN BAD CONDITION (PLACES)**

-in bad condition / dilapidated / run-down

**NEW**

-latest / brand-new / innovative (idea or system)

**OLD**

-old-fashioned / outdated / obsolete

**VERY**

-absolutely / extremely / highly / incredibly / remarkably

**GOOD PERFORMANCE / PIECE OF WORK**

-excellent / outstanding / impressive / exceptional

**GOOD FOR A PARTICULAR JOB, PURPOSE, ETC**

-suitable / right / proper / appropriate / be suited to

**WRONG INFORMATION / NUMBERS**

-incorrect / inaccurate / misleading

**NOT REASONABLE / NECESSARY**

-unjustified / unreasonable / without good reason

**RELAX**

-unwind / wind down: Set in spectacular countryside, the Shiga Hotel is the perfect place to unwind.

-make someone feel at ease

-relaxed / feel at ease / laid-back (not easily worried or annoyed) /

**NERVOUS**

-tense / uneasy / anxious / be under stress

**PUBLIC SERVICES**

-facilities: The facilities at the hotel were excellent -- tennis courts, swimming pool, several bars and a good restaurant.

-amenities: things such as shops, parks, or restaurants that make living or working in a place more pleasant  
I prefer this part of the city because there are plenty of good amenities.

## COMPARISONS

- a great deal / far / much + comparative (cheaper / more economical than)
- a bit / slightly / barely + comparative (cheaper / more economical than)
- by far / easily the + superlative (This is easily the best solution we can think of)

## VERY MUCH / NOT VERY MUCH

- dramatically / significantly / slightly

## AND

- As well (as) / in addition to: Over 600 people will lose their jobs, in addition to the 400 people who left the company last year.
- In addition: A fifth of the world's population lives on less than \$1 a day. In addition, over 100 million children are living on the streets.
- Furthermore / Moreover: used at the beginning of a sentence when adding an important fact that is connected with what you have just said: The drug has strong side effects. Furthermore, it can be addictive.

## IF

- as long as / on condition that / provided that

## OR

- alternatively: You can go up into the mountains. Alternatively, you can stroll around one of Switzerland's delightful cities where the old mixes with the new.
- on THE one hand ... on the other (hand)

## BECAUSE

- As / since: As it was a hot day, they decided to leave all the windows open. Since it is difficult to predict how the climate will change, it is not possible to say which countries will suffer the most.
- thanks to
- DUE TO/OWING TO + NOUN  
The delay was due to a problem with the ship's engines.
- DUE TO/OWING TO + THE FACT THAT + subject + verb  
The men did most of the work in the fields. This was partly due to the fact that the men were stronger.

## BUT/ALTHOUGH

- While / whereas / by contrast
- However: *However* is usually used in the middle of a sentence, separated from the rest of the sentence by commas: Jack and his family managed to escape before the soldiers arrived. Other families in the village, however, were less lucky. Or it comes at the beginning of a sentence: He began his academic career as a mathematician. However, his main achievements were in the field of nuclear physics.
- Nevertheless: *Nevertheless* is usually used at the beginning of a sentence, or at the end.
- IN SPITE OF/DESPITE + NOUN  
Despite his lack of formal education, he became one of the world's leading mathematicians.
- IN SPITE OF/DESPITE + verb + ING  
This was a dinosaur that weighed only 10 tons, in spite of being some 28 metres long.
- IN SPITE OF/DESPITE + THE FACT THAT + subject + verb  
Many people are worried that cellphones may be dangerous to health, despite the fact that most of the research suggests that there is little risk.