ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Advanced Level Grammar Exercise – MCQ Test 17

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Explanations

1. His scheme, with all its shortcomings, will inevitably be pushed through _____, by Tuesday, we can produce one which is obviously much more feasible.
✔ **C) unless**
Unless means 'if not' or 'except if'. The scheme will be pushed through *__if we do not produce a better one by Tuesday. Not__ in case__, which means 'as a precaution against something happening' and does not fit this condition.__ So that **expresses purpose, and** moreover* adds information, so neither links the two ideas logically.

2. _____ he gives the appearance of sincerity and reliability, just remember that you can't trust him an inch.
✔ **E) Though**
Though (= although) introduces a concessive clause. It contrasts how he appears (**sincere and reliable**) with the reality (**you can't trust him an inch**). Not **Nevertheless**: it is an adverb, not a conjunction, so it cannot join a subordinate clause to the main clause.

3. On that occasion, he really was _____ luck: it was as if everything had combined _____ him.
✔ **C) out of / against**
Out of luck is a fixed expression meaning 'unlucky; without good fortune'. **Combine against someone** means 'work together to someone's disadvantage'. The second clause explains the first: everything worked against him, so he had no luck.

4. Few sociologists will admit that a city is distinct _____ a village merely _____ the number of its inhabitants.
✔ **B) from / by**
The adjective **distinct** takes the preposition **from**: **distinct from a village**. **By** expresses the criterion or means of distinguishing: **merely by the number of its inhabitants**. Not **of**: we say **distinct from**, never **distinct of**.

5. Water has a moderating effect on temperature, _____ summer and midday heat, and winter and midnight cold.
✔ **E) diminishing**
The active present participle **diminishing** introduces a clause that explains the result of the main clause: water moderates temperature, and in doing so it **diminishes** (reduces) heat and cold. Water is the doer, so a passive form such as **being diminished** or **diminished** is wrong. **Having diminished** would wrongly suggest the reduction happened before the moderating effect.

6. When that happened, their hopes _____ because the army _____ its most trusted leaders.
✔ **C) waned / had lost**
When that happened sets the story in the past, so the main verb is past simple: **waned** (= became weaker). The army's loss of its leaders happened earlier and caused the hopes to wane, so it takes the past perfect: **had lost**.

7. They _____ the advantages and the disadvantages of the takeover when I _____ them an hour or so later.
✔ **D) were discussing / rejoined**
The past continuous **were discussing** describes an action already in progress when a shorter past action, **rejoined** (past simple), happened. The time clue **an hour or so later** shows that both actions are in the past.

8. We still _____ that any changes in the law along these lines _____ to our advantage.
✔ **E) believe / will be**
Still shows a belief held now, so we use the present simple with a stative verb: **believe**. The changes in the law lie in the future, so the reported prediction takes **will be**. Not **have believed / would be**: **still** with a present-time belief needs the present simple, and **would** would need a past reporting verb.

9. In calculators, calculations _____ entirely with integers yield exact results as long as the numbers _____ too big for the space allotted.
✔ **D) done / are not**
Done is a reduced passive relative clause: **calculations (which are) done entirely with integers**. The calculations do not perform the action, so the active form **doing** is wrong. After **as long as**, which states a condition about a general truth, we use the present simple: **are not**.

10. Twenty years ago, the study of ageing _____ as somewhat misdirected, but now it _____ into an important science.
✔ **A) was regarded / has developed**
Twenty years ago is a finished past time, so we need the past simple passive: **was regarded**. **But now** shows a change that has a result in the present, so we use the present perfect: **has developed**. Not **was being regarded**: **regard** is used statively here, and the continuous form sounds unnatural.

11. In some ways, we know little more about the planets than _____ the ancients who worshipped them.
✔ **E) did**
After **than**, the auxiliary can come before the subject in formal comparisons: **than did the ancients** = **than the ancients did**. The ancients lived in the past, so the past simple auxiliary **did** is needed. Not **had done**: there is no earlier past point to which the past perfect could refer.

12. The first stage of the new factory project _____ last year, and work on the second phase _____ well now.
✔ **B) was completed / is progressing**
Last year is a finished past time, so we need the past simple passive: **was completed**. **Now** shows an action happening at present, so we use the present continuous: **is progressing** (= developing). Not **has been completed**: the present perfect cannot be used with a finished time expression such as **last year**.

13. While the battle for market share _____ out in the open, the technological capability of the larger companies _____ them the lead.
✔ **C) was being fought / gave**
While introduces a background action in progress, so we use the past continuous passive: **was being fought** (the battle is fought **by** the companies). The main event, which happened during that time, takes the past simple: **gave**. Not **was fought**: the simple form does not show the action as ongoing background.

14. Dwindling oil reserves and concerns _____ exhaust emissions have heightened the search _____ more sustainable sources.
✔ **D) over / for**
Concerns over (or **about**) something means 'worries regarding it'. **Search** takes **for**: **the search for more sustainable sources**. Not **about / at**: although **concerns about** is correct, **search at** is not.

15. The World Commission on Dams found that, _____ average, large dams exceed their budget _____ 56%.
✔ **E) on / by**
On average is a fixed phrase meaning 'typically'. **By** shows the amount of difference: **exceed their budget by 56%**. Not **in / off**: we never say **in average**.

16. The interiors of planets are totally inaccessible, _____ what we know about them comes from indirect measurements and analysis.
✔ **A) so**
So introduces a result: because the interiors cannot be reached, our knowledge must come from indirect measurements. Not **since**, which introduces a reason and would reverse the logic. **So as** must be followed by **to** + infinitive.

17. It was not long _____ the design deficiencies of the room became apparent.
✔ **B) before**
It was not long before + clause is a fixed pattern meaning 'soon / after a short time': **It was not long before the problems became apparent**. Not **when**: **It was not long when** is not a correct English pattern.

18. In every forensic laboratory, there should be _____ with the basic training to make sense of botanical evidence.
✔ **C) someone**
In an affirmative statement about a person who should exist, we use **someone**: **there should be someone with the basic training**. Not **anyone**: it is mainly used in questions and negatives, or to mean 'it doesn't matter who', so **there should be anyone** is wrong.

19. The centre conducted the study _____ identify priority areas for conservation.
✔ **A) in order to**
In order to + base verb expresses purpose: the reason the centre did the study was **to identify** priority areas. Not **due to**: it means 'because of' and is followed by a noun, not a verb.

20. The next model the company produced was well-engineered and finely built; _____, it never became popular and sales were poor.
✔ **B) even so**
Even so means 'despite that'. It introduces a surprising contrast: the model was well made, but it still did not sell. Not **on the contrary**: it is used to reject a previous statement and replace it with an opposite one, not to show an unexpected result.

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