ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Advanced Level Grammar Exercise – MCQ Test 9

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Explanations

1. In 1906 at Bogazköy, several thousand cuneiform tablets _____ and most of them _____ now on exhibit in the Anatolian Civilizations Museum in Ankara.
✔ **B) were discovered / are**
The first gap describes a finished event at a stated past time (**In 1906**), so it needs the past simple passive, **were discovered**. The present perfect cannot be used with a definite past time expression. The second gap describes the situation today (**now**), so the present simple **are** is needed. Not **have been discovered**, because the present perfect clashes with **In 1906**.

2. One oil company, in particular, claims _____ its best to balance economic progress with environmental care and social responsibility.
✔ **E) to have done**
Claim is followed by a to-infinitive. Here the company refers to its own past actions, so the perfect infinitive **to have done** is used: the action comes before the claiming. **Claim** is not followed by an -ing form, so **having done** is wrong. The passive forms (**to be done**, **having been done**) do not fit, because the company is the one doing its best.

3. Had it not been for the variety and flexibility of its trades, Huddersfield, like so many of the other textile towns, _____ into a decline in the 20th century.
✔ **C) would have gone**
Had it not been for is an inverted third conditional meaning **If it had not been for**. It describes an unreal past situation, so the result clause needs **would have** + past participle: **would have gone into a decline**. Not **would go**, because the decline would have happened in the past (**in the 20th century**), not now.

4. _____ the letters written by so many parents, the headmaster agreed not to expel the boys.
✔ **A) In response to**
In response to means 'as a reaction to'. The headmaster changed his decision because of the parents' letters. **With reference to** is a formal way of saying 'about' and is used mainly in letters (**With reference to your email…**), so it does not express a reaction. **Apart from** and **In case of** make no sense here.

5. Henry VII's foreign policy was unheroic and unspectacular; _____ did he go to war and that was when he invaded France.
✔ **D) only once**
When a restrictive expression such as **only once** begins a clause, subject and auxiliary are inverted: **only once did he go to war**. The meaning also fits: his policy was unspectacular because he went to war just one time. **Once again** and **once more** do not cause inversion and suggest repeated wars. **Never before** contradicts 'that was when he invaded France'.

6. Bennett's novel “The Old Wives' Tale” is the one _____ he is likely to be best known by posterity.
✔ **C) by which**
The relative clause refers to a thing (the novel), so **which** is needed. The preposition comes from the phrase **be known by something** (identified through a work): **he is best known by this novel → the one by which he is likely to be best known**. **For whom** refers to people. **That** cannot follow a preposition and would leave the clause incomplete without one.

7. Infectious diseases are those which are caused _____ an invasion of the body _____ organisms from outside.
✔ **A) by / by**
Both gaps use the passive agent preposition **by**. A disease is **caused by** something, and the noun **invasion** takes **of** for what is invaded and **by** for the invader: **an invasion of the body by organisms**. The repetition may look odd, but each **by** belongs to a different phrase. **With / of** is wrong: 'caused with' is not used, and 'invasion of the body of organisms' changes the meaning.

8. He looked _____ nervously _____ his shoulder, hoping that no one was paying him any attention.
✔ **C) back / over**
The fixed expression is **look back over your shoulder**, meaning to turn your head to see what is behind you. **Back** gives the direction and **over** goes with **shoulder**. None of the other pairs combine correctly with **his shoulder**.

9. We know nothing at all about the company's new chairman _____ that he's just had his fiftieth birthday.
✔ **E) except**
Except that introduces the only exception to a general statement: we know nothing, apart from one fact. **In case** (as a precaution) and **on condition (that)** (a requirement) do not fit the meaning. **Instead** cannot introduce a clause with **that**.

10. _____ wins will be expected to take the rest of us for a meal.
✓ A) Whoever
Whoever means 'the person who, no matter who'. It begins a noun clause that acts as the subject of the sentence: **Whoever wins will be expected…**. The subject form is needed because it is the subject of **wins**, so **whomever** and **whomsoever** (object forms) are wrong. **Who** alone cannot begin a subject clause like this, and **whatever** refers to things, not people.

11. Today, _____ rapid transportation and communications, the whole world is becoming one community with common economic interests.
✓ D) because of
Because of + noun phrase gives a reason: rapid transport and communications are the cause of the world becoming one community. **In spite of** expresses contrast, which is the opposite of the meaning here. **As long as** and **just as** introduce clauses, not noun phrases. **Such as** introduces examples.

12. Of all the drugs that have been prescribed so far, this has proved to be _____ effective one.
✓ B) the most
Of all the drugs compares one drug with a whole group, so the superlative with the article is needed: **the most effective one**. **Most** without **the** does not work before a singular countable noun with **one**. **More** / **the more** are comparatives, used for comparing two things.

13. Of course, nobody knows what the outcome of the election _____, but at the moment Malcolm _____ as the most likely candidate.
✓ D) will be / is regarded
The election result lies in the future, so the indirect question needs **will be**: **what the outcome… will be**. The second gap describes how people see Malcolm now (**at the moment**). **Regard** is used here as a state verb, so the present simple passive **is regarded** fits. Not **has been regarded**, because the focus is on the present situation, not a period up to now.

14. The doctors are of the opinion that if the disorder _____ a few months earlier, it _____ treated successfully.
✓ A) had been diagnosed / could have been
This is a third conditional about an unreal past: the disorder was not diagnosed early, so it could not be treated. The if-clause needs the past perfect (**had been diagnosed**), and the result clause needs a modal + **have** + past participle (**could have been treated**). Not **were diagnosed / would be**, because that second conditional refers to the present or future, while **a few months earlier** points to the past.

15. He's certainly going to recommend that the changes in the structure of the company be introduced step by step, and _____.
✓ B) so am I
To add that the same is true of another person, use **so** + auxiliary + subject, with inversion. The auxiliary must match the first clause: **He's (is) going to recommend → so am I**. **So I am** (no inversion) expresses surprise or confirmation, not addition. **So do I** would need a present simple verb in the first clause.

16. Several members of the research team haven't handed in their reports yet, and I must admit I haven't _____.
✓ C) either
After a negative verb, **either** is used at the end of the sentence to add a similar negative statement: **I haven't either**. **Too**, **as well** and **also** are used in positive sentences. **Neither** needs a positive verb and inversion (**neither have I**), so it cannot follow **haven't**.

17. Acid rain only became a _____ environmental issue in the 1980s following groundbreaking studies in the 1970s.
✓ E) prominent
Prominent means important, well known and widely noticed: **a prominent issue**. After the 1970s studies, acid rain became a major topic of public discussion in the 1980s. **Destructive** describes acid rain itself, not how much attention the issue got, and **previous**, **deceitful** and **reckless** do not make sense here.

18. Using the dam to generate power would not _____ the treaty with the neighbouring country, but diverting water out of the river would.
✓ C) violate
To **violate** a treaty, law or agreement means to break it or act against it: **Diverting the water would violate the treaty. Betray** is used with people, trust or principles, not usually with treaties. **Intimidate**, **convert** and **fetch** do not collocate with **treaty**.

19. The _____ that the company uses to move money from its overseas branches to its head office are often identical to those used by much larger firms.
✓ B) methods
Methods are ways of doing something, and you **use a method to do** something: **the methods it uses to move money**. **Regulations**, **laws** and **provisions** are rules that you follow or obey, not tools you use to transfer money. **Admissions** (confessions or entries) makes no sense here.

20. In the wake of yet another financial scandal, the chief accountant handed in his _____ to the director.
✓ D) resignation
To **hand in your resignation** means to formally tell your employer that you are leaving your job. After a scandal, resigning is a typical reaction. **Retirement** is leaving work because of age, and it is not 'handed in'. **Redundancy** is losing your job because it is no longer needed. A **promotion** and a **vacancy** are not things you hand in.