ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Modality Advanced Level MCQs Test With Answers 3

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Explanations

1. You _____ the meeting this week if you are too busy. There is going to be another one next week and you _____ to that one.
✔ **B) needn't attend / can go**
Needn't + infinitive means something is not necessary: you are free to skip this meeting. **Can go** gives permission or possibility for the next one. Not **can't attend**: that would mean you are not allowed, which contradicts 'if you are too busy'.

2. You look as if you are having trouble with your homework. _____ you like me to help you with it?
✔ **D) Would**
Would you like me to…? is the polite fixed pattern for offering help. Not **Shall**: we say **Shall I help you?**, not **Shall you like me to…**.

3. I thought that I had my keys with me, but I can't find them in my coat. I _____ them in my other coat.
✔ **D) must have left**
Must have + past participle expresses a confident deduction about the past. The speaker can't find the keys in this coat, so the logical conclusion is **I must have left them in my other coat**.

4. I've heard that Mr Benner is the toughest teacher for this course. You _____ to get another teacher, or you can't get a good mark.
✔ **A) had better try**
Had better + bare infinitive gives strong advice, often with a warning of a bad result ('or you can't get a good mark'). The past forms (**must have tried**, **might have tried**) don't fit advice about the future.

5. You _____ to bed early the night before an exam. A good night's sleep will do you more good than studying all night and then falling asleep during the exam.
✔ **C) ought to go**
Ought to + infinitive gives advice, like **should**. The next sentence explains why going to bed early is a good idea. Not **may go**: that gives permission, not advice.

6. Would you mind _____ your music so loudly? I am trying to study.
✔ **B) not playing**
Would you mind is followed by the -ing form; the negative is **not** + -ing: **Would you mind not playing…?** Not **not to play**: **mind** never takes a to-infinitive.

7. The former president never _____ to the press, but this one is much more accessible.
✔ **E) used to talk**
Used to + infinitive describes a past habit or state that is no longer true. **Never used to talk** contrasts the former president with the current one, who is 'much more accessible'.

8. Hurray! We _____ to school today because it is snowing so hard.
✔ **D) don't have to go**
Don't have to means there is no obligation. 'Hurray!' and 'today' show it is a present situation: school is off because of the snow. The **have + past participle** forms refer to the past and don't fit.

9. Wilber _____ smoking and eating meat after his heart attack, but he didn't and now he has had a second one.
✔ **A) should have stopped**
Should have + past participle criticises a past action that did not happen. The clue is 'but he didn't'. Not **must have stopped**: that is a deduction that he did stop, which contradicts the sentence.

10. According to the weather report, it _____ tomorrow, and if it does, we _____ the hike I've been looking forward to.
✔ **C) may rain / will have to cancel**
May expresses a future possibility (a weather forecast is not certain). In the first conditional the result clause uses a future form, so **will have to cancel** expresses a future obligation. **Must rain** is a deduction, not a forecast.

11. I know you have a lot of work to do, but it is your own fault; you _____ everything until the last minute.
✔ **D) shouldn't have left**
Shouldn't have + past participle criticises something that was done in the past. 'It is your own fault' shows the person did leave everything until the last minute. Not **can't have left**: that says it is impossible that they did it.

12. I'd really rather _____ in Hawaii at the moment than be stuck behind this desk all day.
✔ **E) be surfing**
Would rather is followed by the bare infinitive. The continuous infinitive **be surfing** is used because the speaker means an action in progress 'at the moment'. Not **to surf** or **to be surfing**: **would rather** never takes **to**.

13. You _____ your plane ticket so far in advance because flights to Birmingham are never full.
✔ **B) needn't have bought**
Needn't have + past participle means you did something, but it was not necessary. You bought the ticket early, but flights are never full, so it was unnecessary. Not **couldn't have bought**: that would mean it was impossible.

14. In this factory, all workers _____ their heads with a safety helmet, but in the offices it is optional.
✔ **A) have to cover**
Have to + infinitive expresses an obligation, often a rule. The contrast with 'it is optional' shows that wearing a helmet is required. Not **might cover**: that only expresses possibility, not a rule.

15. I _____ a stockbroker if I had wanted to, but I thought life as a bass guitarist in a heavy metal band would be far more interesting.
✔ **D) could have become**
Could have + past participle refers to a past possibility that was not realised. The third conditional clause 'if I had wanted to' and 'but I thought…' show that the speaker didn't become a stockbroker. Not **was able to become**: that suggests he actually did it.

16. You _____ more carefully. Now the insurance company won't pay you anything because the accident was your fault.
✔ **D) ought to have been driving**
Ought to have been + -ing criticises how someone behaved during a past action. The accident has already happened, so a past form is needed. Not **must have been driving**: that is a deduction, not criticism.

17. I'd rather you _____ out tonight because, according to the news, there could be trouble downtown.
✔ **C) didn't go**
When **would rather** is followed by a different subject (**I'd rather you…**), we use the past simple to talk about the present or future: **I'd rather you didn't go out tonight**. Not **not to go**: this pattern doesn't take an infinitive.

18. A friend of mine told me that I _____ India in the summer because that is the monsoon season when it is both too hot and too wet.
✔ **E) shouldn't visit**
Shouldn't gives advice against doing something. The reason (monsoon season, too hot and too wet) shows the friend was advising the speaker. Not **needn't visit**: that only means it is not necessary, which doesn't match the warning.

19. Hawaii is such an expensive place to live and the wages are so low that you _____ very hard just to get by.
✔ **B) have to work**
Have to expresses an obligation that comes from circumstances: high prices and low wages force people to work hard 'just to get by'. The present simple shows a general situation.

20. We had better hurry if we want to get back to the hotel before the curfew. No one _____ out after dark, except for the patrol forces, you know.
✔ **B) is supposed to be**
Be supposed to refers to what a rule or law expects: during a curfew nobody is allowed out except the patrols. Not **has to be**: **No one has to be out** would mean nobody is obliged to go out, which is a different meaning.

21. Mike couldn't attend university because he _____ his family when his father died.
✔ **A) had to support**
Had to is the past form of **have to** and expresses a past obligation. After his father died, Mike was forced to support his family, so he couldn't go to university. **Must have supported** is a deduction, not an obligation.

22. Petroleum deposits can occur almost anywhere – they _____ under deserts, under fertile land, or even under the sea.
✔ **B) may be**
May be expresses possibility. 'Can occur almost anywhere' shows that the deposits are possibly in any of these places, not certainly. Not **must be**: that expresses certainty, and the list of different places shows this is only a possibility.

23. Using the latest and most expensive technology, including nuclear batteries, space scientists _____ to the furthest reaches of our solar system now.
✔ **D) are able to probe**
Be able to expresses ability, and the present form **are able to** matches 'now'. Thanks to the new technology, scientists now have the ability to probe distant parts of the solar system. The past forms contradict 'now'.

24. Now remember, when you are in the race you _____ to run too fast in the first few laps because you will need plenty of energy for the final sprint.
✔ **C) mustn't try**
Mustn't expresses a strong prohibition or a strong warning from the speaker, like a coach's instruction: don't try to run too fast. The past forms (**shouldn't have tried**) don't fit advice about a future race.

25. There are some sounds that are out of the range of the human ear but which dogs _____.
✔ **C) can hear**
Can expresses natural ability: dogs are able to hear sounds that humans cannot. Not **ought to hear** or **have to hear**: these express advice or obligation, not ability.

26. My sister _____ a German teacher because her German was fluent, but she decided to become an accountant instead.
✔ **D) could have become**
Could have + past participle shows a past possibility that did not happen. Her German made it possible, but 'she decided to become an accountant instead'. Not **must have become**: that is a deduction that she did become one.

27. You _____ me at work. The boss was really angry because he had warned me before about personal calls.
✔ **B) shouldn't have phoned**
Shouldn't have + past participle criticises a past action that did happen. The phone call made the boss angry, so the speaker says it was a mistake. Not **can't have phoned**: that means it is impossible that you phoned.

28. Sally _____ Italian like a native, but since she moved to Indiana, she has forgotten most of it.
✔ **A) used to speak**
Used to + infinitive describes a past ability or state that is no longer true. Sally spoke Italian fluently in the past but 'has forgotten most of it' now.

29. While there seem to be plenty of unexploited petroleum reserves, some experts worry that there _____ enough to carry us through the next century.
✔ **A) may not be**
May not be expresses a possibility about the future, which fits the experts' worry. Not **don't have to be**: that expresses lack of obligation, which makes no sense here.

30. Today, no one can imagine what a battle at sea was like in the days of sail. It _____ both an impressive and frightening sight.
✔ **E) must have been**
Must have been expresses a confident deduction about the past. Battles 'in the days of sail' are in the past, so a perfect modal is needed. Not **might be** or **could be**: they refer to the present.

31. When we went to Japan, we _____ anything for ourselves because our Japanese hosts took care of everything.
✔ **C) didn't need to do**
Didn't need to + infinitive means something wasn't necessary, so it usually wasn't done. The hosts did everything, so the speakers did nothing. Not **needn't have done**: that suggests they did it although it was unnecessary.

32. A: I hear a noise coming from the kitchen.

B: My greedy brother _____ for something to eat.
✔ **A) must be looking**
Must be + -ing expresses a confident deduction about an action happening now. B hears the noise and concludes: **my brother must be looking for food**. Not **ought to be looking**: that would mean he should be doing it.

33. A: Did you know that classes were cancelled yesterday because the heating in the building failed?

B: No, but I _____ anyway because I was in bed all day with flu.
✔ **E) couldn't have attended**
Couldn't have + past participle means it was impossible for something to happen in the past. B was ill in bed all day, so he would not have been able to attend anyway.

34. I know I _____ for a job, but there are so few jobs for a person of my abilities, which is discouraging.
✔ **B) ought to look**
Ought to expresses what is right or advisable: the speaker knows he should look for a job, but finds it discouraging. Not **used to look**: 'I know' and the present-tense reason show a present situation.

35. I _____ the same computer program when I worked at a bank, so it _____ easy for me to adjust to this new job.
✔ **B) used to use / should be**
Used to use describes a past habit (at the bank). **Should be** expresses a logical expectation: it ought to be easy because the program is familiar. Not **must have used / must be**: the speaker knows his own past, so a deduction is wrong.

36. He _____ as carefully as he claimed he was. Why did he bump into the lamp post then?
✔ **E) can't have been driving**
Can't have been + -ing is a negative deduction about an action in progress in the past. He hit the lamp post, so the speaker is sure he was not driving carefully. Not **won't be driving**: that refers to the future, not to what he was doing when he hit the lamp post.

37. Would you mind if I _____ early this afternoon? I have a dentist's appointment at 4:30.
✔ **D) left**
Would you mind if I…? is followed by the past simple to make a polite request about the present or future: **Would you mind if I left early?** Not **leaving**: that is used without **if I** (**Would you mind me leaving…?**).

38. I'm so glad that I _____ to the meeting place on time yesterday despite the heavy traffic, or the boss would have been really annoyed.
✔ **A) was able to get**
Was able to expresses success on one particular past occasion, often despite difficulty ('despite the heavy traffic'). **Could** is not normally used for one specific achievement. Not **had to get**: that is obligation, not success.

39. Sean _____ married three months ago and since then he _____ out drinking with his old friends.
✔ **C) got / hasn't been able to go**
'Three months ago' needs the past simple (**got**). 'Since then' needs the present perfect, so **hasn't been able to go** expresses a lack of ability from that time until now. Not **has got married**: the present perfect can't be used with 'ago'.

40. These days, he _____ to stop smoking and playing cards as well because his wife is so strict with him, so his life will have changed completely soon.
✔ **B) is trying**
'These days' shows a temporary present situation, so the present continuous **is trying** is needed. Not **had to try**: it is past and doesn't match 'these days'.

41. It is hardly surprising that he is depressed and wonders if he really _____ married.
✔ **E) ought to have got**
Ought to have + past participle asks whether a past action was the right thing to do. He did get married and now wonders if it was a good idea. Not **may have got** or **must have got**: these are deductions, but he knows he got married.

42. Though Sally _____ how to swim, when she met a young man who was a professional diver, she learned quickly.
✓ E) didn’t know
The past simple **didn't know** describes Sally's situation before she met the diver; 'she learned quickly' is also past simple. Not **wouldn't know**: that suggests refusal or a hypothetical, not a simple past fact.

43. Our father never earned much money, but he _____ something nice for us whenever he _____.
✓ C) would buy / could
Would + infinitive can describe a repeated action in the past, like **used to**. **Whenever he could** means each time he was able to. The past simple **never earned** shows the past time frame, so present forms like **does** or **can** don't fit.

44. Where have you been? You _____ here at 2 o’clock, and it’s almost 3.
✓ B) were supposed to be
Was/were supposed to describes an arrangement or expectation that was not met. You were expected at 2, but it's almost 3 and you've only just arrived. Not **must have been**: that is a deduction that you were here.

45. I told my flatmate to buy some bread, but he _____ because there isn’t any here.
✓ A) must have forgotten
Must have + past participle expresses a confident deduction about the past. There is no bread, so the speaker concludes that the flatmate forgot. Not **should have forgotten**: that would mean forgetting was the right thing to do.

46. Sue has only been in Egypt for a year and she already speaks Arabic fluently. She _____ it that quickly. I’m sure she had started studying it before she left England.
✓ C) can’t have learned
Can't have + past participle is a negative deduction about the past: the speaker is sure Sue did not learn Arabic in only a year. The clue is 'I'm sure she had started studying it before she left England'. Not **shouldn't have learned**: that criticises a past action and is not a deduction.

47. Do you think Jeff _____ to join us on our hike? Does he like this sort of activity?
✓ E) would like
Would like + to-infinitive asks about someone's wishes: **Would Jeff like to join us?** Not **would rather** or **had better**: both are followed by a bare infinitive, not **to**.

48. Sam is such a good swimmer that he _____ the Olympic record for the 100-metre race, but unfortunately, he didn’t compete because of a pulled shoulder muscle.
✓ C) could have broken
Could have + past participle expresses a past possibility that didn't happen. Sam was good enough to break the record, but 'he didn't compete'. Not **must have broken**: that is a deduction that he did break it.

49. I wonder what the problem was in the restaurant last night. Three members of staff _____ tables, but there was only one. I must speak to the restaurant manager.
✓ C) should have been clearing
Should have been + -ing describes what was expected to be happening in the past but wasn't: three people were supposed to be clearing tables, but only one was. Not **must have been clearing**: that is a deduction that they were.

50. Hey, watch where you are going! You _____ me!
✓ A) could have killed
Could have + past participle describes something that was possible but didn't happen, often a narrow escape: **You could have killed me!** Not **should have killed**: that would mean killing was the right thing to do.

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