FCE U2 Writing Folder

In the Writing portion of the FCE, you may be asked to write a letter. The **register**—that is, the level of formality of the vocabulary—is important. Think about the target reader and the purpose of the letter. This will help you decide on a suitable style. (Style is assessed as part of communicative achievement, which carries up to five marks.)

Look at the extracts that follow. Which 2 would you describe as informal? Tick the box to the right.

A. This is to inform you of the decisions taken at last week's meeting. Please note that all members of this department are strictly required to be present at such meetings and action may be taken in future to ensure this. ☐

B. I want to let you all know about our staff get-together last week. It's a pity more of you weren't there as it was a terrific occasion. Why not come along next time? There's free coffee and biscuits! ☐

C. Anyway, let me tell you about the party Jack is having on Saturday. Well, just about everyone is coming - even that weird guy Sam from college! Jack says he wants us all to be there, so you'd better not miss it. Why not come down for a few days? You can stay at my place if you want. ☐

An informal style often contains the following: contractions, phrasal verbs, simple linking words, direct questions and some explanation points (but not too many).

Now, read the letter from your English-speaking friend Alex.

Hi! Guess what? My parents have given me some money for passing my exam, so I can splash out on something really cool. I can't choose between buying a new computer game or saving up a bit more and getting some clothes. Which do you think would be better?
And can you suggest what exactly I should get?
Thanks, Alex

Write a letter in response (140-190 words), using the appropriate register.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

To guide you, consider using the following plan:

- Begin with the appropriate greeting: *Dear ___*. (Format matters in FCE.)
- Paragraph 1 should include initial greeting and congratulations.
- Paragraph 2 should include your opinion about which option is better.
- Paragraph 3 should include a description of a specific recommendation.
- Paragraph 4 should include your final remarks.
- End with the appropriate closing.

Note that the plan above answers all of the questions posed in the original letter. This is important to get full marks for content. Also, choose appropriate linkers to improve the flow of ideas in and between paragraphs. See the list in the exercise below.

The following exercise contains examples of key elements in writing letters. Use it as a reference. As a final exercise, decide whether the phrase is formal or informal.

Initial greetings
It was great to hear from you. Inf
I am writing with reference to your letter.
Thanks for writing to me.

Congratulations
Well done!
I would like to offer congratulations on
Let me congratulate you on

Opinion
In my opinion
To my mind
I hold the view that
Personally, I have no doubt that
My own thoughts are

Advice/Suggestion
Why not try
What about trying
It is recommended that you
You could
I urge you to
I suggest that
If I were you

Linkers
Moreover
Also
Then again
Furthermore
Better still
As well as that
What's more
Additionally

Endings
Do drop me a line if you have time.
I look forward to hearing from you without delay.
Hope to hear from you soon.
Keep in touch.
I hope to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Opening and closing an email or a letter
Match these opening and closing formulae and say when you should use each of them.

Hi Brad	*Yours faithfully*
Dear Jayne	*Cheers*
Dear Sir	*Yours sincerely*
Dear Ms Jones	*Love*

Always review your writing before submitting it. Check the spelling and grammar, and make sure the register is consistent.

Write your letter to Alex below.

LIVEWORKSHEETS