

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAM SAMPLE FOR ECONOMIC INFORMATICS

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### PART 1:

#### 1. Reading comprehension I.

##### *Privacy and Computers*

In an era of online social media, people can announce any event to their virtual network of friends, family, and acquaintances within moments. From birthday celebrations to baby pictures, friends get news about each other from texts, tweets, or social networks. In addition, many people use credit cards to purchase products and complete numerous online forms with personal information for a variety of purposes. As a result, personal information is ending up in the hands of other people. There are critics who are concerned by the lack of privacy. Despite such concerns, by following a few common-sense measures, people can use the Internet enjoyably and safely.

In our fast-paced world, social networking sites are, for many people, an important way to keep up with friends and family. The issue now is how open one should be with sharing private information since the information could be stolen by criminals. For example, some people have had their homes broken into because they had posted the details of their vacation online. If they had not posted those details, the thieves would not have known that they had gone away.

One way to reduce the risk of this happening is to activate the privacy controls on social networking sites and smartphones. In other words, think about who will see your information and consider how they might use it. Another important step is to shop only on secure websites so that one's accounts, passwords, and financial records are protected. Some experts recommend that people should treat their online information like they would treat the contents of their wallets. For example, a man bought merchandise on a website that did not have a security padlock, and as a result of this transaction, his bank accounts were emptied. If he had paid attention to the security on the site, he would not have lost his money.

However, it appears that people are becoming more aware of the risks of fraud and taking steps to avoid them since the total percentage of incidences of fraud remained steady in the past years. It may be that people who have grown up using the Internet understand its risks as well as its strengths.

The Washington Post recently carried out a poll to study the extent to which people were concerned about their online privacy and security. The poll, titled 'Surveillance in America', discovered how corporate and government surveillance affected people's online behaviours. It also investigated whether people made use of tracking and anti-tracking technologies for their own uses.

The first set of questions sought to determine people's concern about collection of personal information by social networks, cell phone providers, websites, National Security Agency (NSA) and retailers (Amazon, Target etc.). The overall result of the question set reveals that over 66% of people are concerned about handing over such information to such bodies or organizations.

The next set of questions was to investigate the bright side of surveillance, the one which helped government and businesses to fight/control crime. Although a clear 84% of poll participants thought it was right or 'about right', 16% still found it inappropriate or thought such surveillance compromised their privacy.

Another set of questions was to find the 'Snowden effect', and actions people took in response to NSA's revelation about monitoring each and every aspect of your digital communications – phone records, calls, messages, email – everything. Surprisingly, 74% of people did not take any action to prevent from being tracked! However, of those who did attempt to save their online faces, 42% went for browser's 'do not track' options, 29% deleted/edited something they'd posted earlier online, 17% encrypted their communications, 14% used anonymization services (such as Virtual Private Network), and 13% camouflaged their online/social profiles.

1. What is the main concern mentioned regarding the use of social media?
  - a) People share too much unnecessary personal information for transaction purposes.
  - b) Personal information shared online can be exploited by criminals.
  - c) Social media platforms often crash and lose user data.
  - d) Social media networks charge high fees for privacy controls.
  
2. What recommendation is given to help protect personal information online?
  - a) Avoid using the Internet while on holidays.
  - b) Share vacation details only with family members.
  - c) Shop only on websites with secure connections.
  - d) Use different passwords for all online accounts.
  
3. What does the text suggest about people who have grown up using the Internet?
  - a) They think they know all online risks, which makes them more careless.
  - b) They have learnt how to ignore online threats, as they are used to them.
  - c) They are aware of both the strong points and dangers of the Internet.
  - d) They take more risks when sharing information online.
  
4. According to the poll conducted by The Washington Post, how do most people feel about government and corporate surveillance?
  - a) Over 66% are unconcerned about it since they consider official authorities safe.
  - b) More than half are indifferent to sharing personal information with businesses and authorities.
  - c) The majority are concerned about sharing personal information with such entities.
  - d) Most people fully support the data collection policies of governments and businesses.
  
5. What was the general public's response to the 'Snowden effect'?
  - a) A significant majority took steps to protect their online privacy.
  - b) A large portion of people started using paid security services.
  - c) Most people deleted their social media profiles.
  - d) The majority did nothing to protect their privacy after the revelations.

6. Which of the following actions did 42% of respondents take to avoid being tracked?
- a) Encrypting their communications.
  - b) Using Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).
  - c) Used a simple option in the browser.
  - d) Camouflaging their social profiles.

## 2. Reading comprehension II.

*Why do chief executives earn so much money?*

Whenever news of a corporate meltdown or scandal breaks, many people are astonished to learn exactly how much the chief executive officer of that company actually earns. While the company itself may be in serious financial straits, the CEO often escapes with a healthy severance package, known as a golden parachute, and begins work with another company within months. Many people wonder why CEOs make so much money. The answer is not always clear. One reason they do is the nature of the job behind the title.

While most employees and supervisors understand their particular responsibilities, a CEO needs to have a working knowledge of virtually every aspect of the company. A salary commensurate with this amount of expertise, education and vision may seem high to outsiders. An ideal CEO is someone who has extensively studied the industry as a whole. He or she knows the inner workings of a specific company inside out and from top to bottom. This kind of knowledge is not gathered overnight. But without a dedicated CEO at the top, the company could easily lose its focus.

Another reason CEOs make so much money is the business concept of paying for performance. Stockholders and other investors want to see their company remain profitable year after year. CEOs who can successfully steer their companies through rough economic seas are often rewarded with substantial performance bonuses and other financial incentives to ensure their continued leadership and company loyalty. [...]

7. What is often surprising to people when a corporate scandal occurs?
- a) The company's ability to be able to pay a large amount of money to CEOs.
  - b) The number of employees who earn way too much when the company is struggling to survive.
  - c) The amount of money the CEO earns despite the company's troubles.
  - d) The low salaries of other employees compared to the management's salaries.
8. What is a "golden parachute"?
- a) A special insurance policy for CEOs to earn high salaries even if companies go bankrupt.
  - b) A performance bonus given to employees.
  - c) A large sum of money given to CEOs when they leave a company.
  - d) A company-sponsored retirement plan for top executives.
9. Why do some CEOs earn a high salary according to the text?
- a) They spend most of their time interacting with stockholders.
  - b) They have minimal responsibilities because they know how to delegate tasks to others.
  - c) They are experts in every aspect of the company and the industry.
  - d) They control the company's finances and distribute profits as they see fit.
10. What does the business concept of "paying for performance" involve?
- a) Paying employees based on the overtime they spend at work.
  - b) Paying everyone according to their positions in the hierarchy.
  - c) Reducing salaries during difficult economic times but raising it in good times.
  - d) Giving bonuses to CEOs who keep the company profitable.

### 3. Reading Comprehension III.

Workplace e-mail is unlikely to go away. Roughly 50 years after the first e-mail was sent, total e-mail traffic keeps growing 4 percent a year worldwide. Office workers receive on average 120 messages a day; globally, 125 billion business e-mails are exchanged daily. Despite chat, texting, and mobile messaging of all kinds, most business messages are still sent by e-mail. Moreover, when it comes to marketing, e-mail is very much alive and kicking. Tech expert Alexis Madrigal is one of many staunch defenders of e-mail. "You can't kill email!" he claims. "It's the cockroach of the Internet, and I mean that as a compliment. This resilience is a good thing."

Neither social media, augmented reality, and video chatting, nor phishing, hacking, and spam have diminished the high importance of e-mail in the workplace. Not even popular workplace applications such as the team communication and collaboration tool Slack are likely to replace e-mail anytime soon. One e-mail proponent argues that e-mail is technologically far superior to social media, messaging, and collaboration platforms; he offers advice on turning e-mail into the biggest, "least-distracting," and most sophisticated social network, but one that is offering greater privacy.

E-mail has replaced paper memos for many messages inside organizations and some letters to external audiences. Most businesspeople (85 percent) now first open their e-mail on mobile devices. Because you can expect to use e-mail extensively to communicate at work, it's smart to learn how to do it expertly. You may have to adjust the messaging practices you currently follow for texting, chatting, and posting on Instagram, Snapchat, or Facebook.

Although e-mail is recognized as the mainstay of business communication, it's not always done well. Business journalist Suzy Welch is emphatic that sloppiness and mistakes are not an option: "You may like to write off-the-cuff, train-of-thought messages, because it's fast and easy," she says, "but no one wants to receive them, OK? No one." Author Vicky Oliver insists that more than one typo per e-mail is unprofessional. She also complains about impersonal "one-line emails that are so transactional they sound like an automaton is responding."

Short informal messages mostly travel by text, instant message, or chat. In comparison, e-mail is appropriate for longer, more involved, and well-organized messages that may provide or request information and respond to inquiries. It is especially effective for messages to multiple receivers and messages that must be archived (saved). An e-mail is also appropriate as a cover document when sending longer attachments. E-mail, however, is not a substitute for face-to-face conversations or telephone calls. These channels are much more successful if your goal is to convey enthusiasm or warmth, explain a complex situation, present a persuasive argument, or smooth over disagreements. One expert advises delivering messages in person when they "require a human moment"—that is, those that are emotional, require negotiation, and relate to personnel. Researchers have found that people are 34 times more likely to comply with in-person requests than those sent by e-mail; the scholars also established that most office workers overestimate the persuasiveness of e-mail.

11. In the first paragraph, *chat*, *texting*, and *mobile messaging* are mentioned:

- a) as a contrast to show the current strength of e-mails
- b) as the more likely alternatives for e-mails nowadays
- c) as an upcoming threat that could eliminate e-mails in the future
- d) as a warning to show that information is coming from too many sources

12. In the second paragraph, a supporter of e-mails...

- a) complains that spam, phishing and hacking make e-mails look less important
- b) is afraid that some applications will soon take the place of e-mails
- c) is planning to make e-mails even more powerful
- d) disagrees with e-mails being more advanced than social media

13. According to the text, the way we use texting, chatting, and posting on social media platforms...

- a) makes writing work e-mails easy
- b) is similar to the way we should write work e-mails
- c) is far more useful than time-consuming work e-mails
- d) is not professional enough for work e-mails

14. What does Suzy Welch mean by “off-the-cuff,” “train of thought” messages?

- a) long strings of text with no preparation
- b) thorough and organised texts
- c) unprepared but thoughtful texts
- d) one-line emails that look automated

15. E-mails are more useful...

- a) for sending instant informal messages to multiple receivers
- b) for explaining complex situations and expressing enthusiasm
- c) for clearly articulated and detailed messages that might require a reply
- d) for negotiations and expressing persuasion

#### **4. Vocabulary task**

16. Successful (...) of a new software system requires careful planning and a clear strategy.

- a. consistency
- b. interworking
- c. implementation
- d. expertise

17. The new device is NR+(...), meaning it fully meets the latest standards for non-cellular 5G communication.

- a. purpose-built
- b. on a massive scale
- c. -compliant
- d. streamline

18. To avoid the impression of (...), it's important to explain any frequent changes in jobs on your résumé.

- a. steady career growth
- b. conventional wisdom
- c. job hopping
- d. extensive experience

19. During the interview, the hiring manager will (...) to ensure they match the job's expectations.

- a. promote your qualifications
- b. weed out all candidates
- c. enable your leadership skills
- d. assess your abilities

20. Developing (...) for law enforcement could set a dangerous precedent for user privacy.

- a. unrecoverable data
- b. implications
- c. a security threat
- d. an alternative backdoor mechanism

## 5. Grammar Task:

21. *Pick the question that fits the answer:*

'(...)

'Simone's team. They are the best.'

- a) Which did the team win the competition?
- b) Which team did the competition win?
- c) Which team won the competition?
- d) Which competition did the team win?

22. Why (...) the users to register themselves?

- a) forbids the administrator
- b) the administrator forbids
- c) does forbid the administrator
- d) does the administrator forbid

23. I stepped out of the building, and my car was nowhere. I found out that it (...) by the authorities.

- a) was removing
- b) had been removed
- c) has removed
- d) has been removed

24. I had my phone turned off. I (...) when you called. It went pretty well, I think.

- a) am being interviewed
- b) was being interviewed
- c) was interviewed
- d) have been interviewed

25. Ella had to learn the language quickly, so she tried (...) YouTube videos to see if that can speed up the process.

- a) watch
- b) to watch
- c) watching
- d) to watching

26. She strongly objected (...) our youngest son to a boarding school.

- a) to sending
- b) send
- c) to send
- d) sending

27. I don't mind (...) because I know how these things go.

- a) wait
- b) waiting
- c) to waiting
- d) to wait

28. 'I can't make it on Thursday. I (...) someone at 5.00. Sorry.'

- a) going to see
- b) 'm seeing
- c) will see
- d) see

29. One of you (...) the wrong PIN code three times, and now my phone is locked.

- a) have been entered
- b) have entered
- c) has entered
- d) did entered

30. Well, guys, I know this is not something you enjoy, but you have to make (...) this time if you want better results.

- a) priority
- b) an effort
- c) a risk
- d) research

## PART 2: Speaking

*The candidate randomly picks a card from the table. Each card has a topic and a set of questions:*

### **TOPICS:**

*What Does an IS Career Look Like? / What Is Business Intelligence?*

*5G Technology*

*Privacy Issues*

*Leaving No Trace While Online (Temporary Social Media and Darknet)*

*E-commerce Businesses*

*Company Structures / Management Styles*

*CVs and E-mails*

*Job Interviews*

*Earnings*

*Stress Management and Work-Life Balance*

### **Example of a set of questions:**

#### *Temporary Social Media and Darknet*

1. How do temporary social media platforms differ from traditional social media?
2. What are the key benefits and potential risks associated with the use of temporary social media platforms?
3. How does the concept of privacy differ when using temporary social media compared to platforms where posts are permanent?
4. What are the primary differences between the darknet and the surface web, and how does the darknet contribute to both positive and negative activities online?
5. Discuss the ethical considerations surrounding the use of the darknet for anonymity.

### **Assessment:**

- **Part 1:**

30 multiple choice questions (Reading comprehension / Vocabulary / Grammar) → 30 points

- 0-14 overall correct answers: FAIL
- 15-30 overall correct answers: PASS

- **Part 2: (Only available if Part 1 results in PASS)**

5 questions (Speaking)

→ 30 points:

10 points for Content (Relevance and Quality of Answers)

10 points for Language (Grammar and Vocabulary)

10 points for Communication Skills (Fluency, Pronunciation, Style, Interaction)

### **Source material to prepare for the exam:**

Maior Enikő, Szabó Roland-Attila. *Partium Language Exams – English Language – 10 topics for students with specialisation in Economic Informatics*. Partium Kiadó, 2024

***(The book is available at the Partium Language Center)***