

Email Vocabulary – Lesson 2: Emails in Context

Level: B1 | Business English | Student Worksheet

Vocabulary

NOUNS — Situational vocabulary

resolution (noun)	A solution to a problem or an end to a dispute.	<i>We hope to reach a resolution within five working days.</i>
objection (noun)	A statement expressing disagreement with something.	<i>The client raised an objection to the revised pricing.</i>
compensation (noun)	Something given to make up for a loss, mistake, or inconvenience.	<i>We would like to offer compensation for the delay.</i>
approval (noun)	Official agreement or permission for something to proceed.	<i>The project cannot begin without board approval.</i>
rejection (noun)	A formal refusal of a proposal, application, or request.	<i>We received a rejection from the funding committee.</i>
amendment (noun)	A change or addition made to a document or agreement.	<i>Please review the amendments to the contract before signing.</i>
grievance (noun)	A formal complaint about unfair treatment.	<i>She submitted a formal grievance to the HR department.</i>
authorisation (noun)	Official permission given by someone in authority.	<i>You will need authorisation from the finance director.</i>
backlog (noun)	A build-up of work or tasks not yet completed.	<i>We are working through a significant backlog of orders.</i>
timeline (noun)	A schedule showing when stages of a project should be completed.	<i>Could you share the timeline for the new product launch?</i>

FIXED PHRASES

We regret to inform you that	[delivering bad news]	Used to introduce negative information politely.
Please be advised that	[formal notice]	Used to introduce information the reader needs to be aware of.
I am writing on behalf of	[representing someone]	Used when writing in place of another person or organisation.
We would appreciate your earliest response.	[requesting urgency]	A polite way to ask for a reply as soon as possible.

I can confirm that	[confirming information]	Used to state formally that something is true or has been arranged.
Please note that	[drawing attention]	Used to highlight information the reader should pay attention to.
Subject to your approval,	[conditional agreement]	Used when something can proceed once the reader has agreed.
We apologise for any inconvenience caused.	[apologising formally]	A fixed phrase used to close a complaint response or delay notice.

Exercise 1: Sentence Transformation

Rewrite each sentence using the word or phrase given. Do not change the meaning.

1. I am sorry to tell you that your application has not been successful.

Use: **WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT**

2. We can only go ahead with the plan once you have agreed to it.

Use: **SUBJECT TO YOUR APPROVAL,**

3. A formal complaint was sent to the HR department by the employee.

Use: **GRIEVANCE (active voice)**

4. The contract has been changed to reflect the new payment terms.

Use: **AMENDMENT**

5. We are sorry for the problems this has caused you.

Use: **WE APOLOGISE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE CAUSED.**

6. The manager needs to give permission before the payment can be made.

Use: **AUTHORISATION**

Exercise 2: Error Identification

Each sentence may contain one error, or no error at all. Underline the incorrect word and write the correction. If the sentence is correct, write "Correct".

1. We regret to inform you that your application has been unaccepted.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

2. Please be advised that the office will be closed on the 25th.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

3. The client raised an objection to the revised price.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

4. We are currently working through a significant backdate of orders.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

5. Subject to your approval, we will continue with the revised proposal.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

6. You will need authorisation from the finance director to release the payment.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

7. I am writing on behalf for the managing director.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

8. We would appreciate your earliest possible reply.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

Exercise 3: Gap Fill

Complete each sentence with the correct word or phrase from the box.

Word Bank: approval | backlog | amendment | I can confirm that | grievance | We would appreciate your earliest response | authorisation | Please note that

1. The board gave its ____ for the new budget last Thursday.
2. We are currently experiencing a ____ due to a higher than usual volume of requests.
3. Please review the proposed ____ to section 4 of the contract.
4. ____ your order has been dispatched and will arrive by Thursday.
5. She raised a formal ____ with HR after being passed over for promotion.
6. ____ as the deadline for this matter is Friday.
7. The project will not be able to proceed without ____ from the board.
8. ____ all invoices must be submitted by the last working day of the month.

Exercise 4: Matching

Match each word or phrase (A) to its definition (B).

A – Word / Phrase	B – Definition
1. resolution ____	6. A formal refusal of a proposal, application, or request
2. compensation ____	8. Official permission given by someone in authority
3. grievance ____	2. Something given to make up for a loss or inconvenience
4. amendment ____	1. A solution to a problem or an end to a dispute

5. timeline ____	3. A formal complaint about unfair treatment
6. rejection ____	7. A build-up of tasks or work that have not yet been completed
7. backlog ____	4. A change or addition made to a document or agreement
8. authorisation ____	5. A schedule showing when stages of a project should be completed

Exercise 5: Word Sort

Place each word in the correct category.

Word Bank: authorisation | approval | backlog | timeline | resolution | amendment | rejection | objection | grievance | compensation

Solving problems	Decisions & permissions	Time & progress
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Exercise 6: Paragraph Gap Fill

Complete the email extract by writing the correct word or phrase in each gap. Use the context to help you.

Word Bank: We regret to inform you that | compensation | I am writing on behalf of | grievance | authorisation | We would appreciate your earliest response

1. ____ the delivery of your order was delayed.
2. we would like to offer ____ in the form of a discount.
3. ____ our Customer Relations Manager, Mr David Park.
4. He has reviewed your ____ and confirmed it meets the criteria.
5. any refund will require ____ from our finance department.
6. ____, as we would like to resolve this matter quickly.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY

Do Not Distribute to Students

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Exercise 1: Sentence Transformation

1. I am sorry to tell you that your application has not been successful.

Answer: We regret to inform you that your application has not been successful.

2. We can only go ahead with the plan once you have agreed to it.

Answer: Subject to your approval, we will proceed with the plan.

3. A formal complaint was sent to the HR department by the employee.

Answer: The employee submitted a formal grievance to the HR department.

4. The contract has been changed to reflect the new payment terms.

Answer: An amendment has been made to the contract to reflect the new payment terms.

5. We are sorry for the problems this has caused you.

Answer: We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

6. The manager needs to give permission before the payment can be made.

Answer: The payment cannot be made without authorisation from the manager.

Exercise 2: Error Identification

1. We regret to inform you that your application has been unaccepted.

Error: "unaccepted" → Correction: "unsuccessful"

Reason: Wrong word — "unaccepted" is not standard; "unsuccessful" is the correct term for a rejected application.

2. Please be advised that the office will be closed on the 25th.

Answer: Correct — no error.

3. The client raised an objection to the revised price.

Answer: Correct — no error.

4. We are currently working through a significant backdate of orders.

Error: "backdate" → Correction: "backlog"

Reason: Wrong word — "backdate" means to put an earlier date on a document; "backlog" means a build-up of unfinished work.

5. Subject to your approval, we will continue with the revised proposal.

Error: "continue" → Correction: "proceed"

Reason: Wrong word — "continue" is not the standard collocation here; the fixed phrase uses "proceed with".

6. You will need authorisation from the finance director to release the payment.

Answer: Correct — no error.

7. I am writing on behalf for the managing director.

Error: "for" → Correction: "of"

Reason: Wrong preposition — "on behalf of" is the correct fixed phrase.

8. We would appreciate your earliest possible reply.

Answer: Correct — no error.

Exercise 3: Gap Fill

1. The board gave its ____ for the new budget last Thursday.

Answer: approval

2. We are currently experiencing a ____ due to a higher than usual volume of requests.

Answer: backlog

3. Please review the proposed ____ to section 4 of the contract.

Answer: amendment

4. ____ your order has been dispatched and will arrive by Thursday.

Answer: I can confirm that

5. She raised a formal ____ with HR after being passed over for promotion.

Answer: grievance

6. ____ as the deadline for this matter is Friday.

Answer: We would appreciate your earliest response

7. The project will not be able to proceed without ____ from the board.

Answer: authorisation

8. ____ all invoices must be submitted by the last working day of the month.

Answer: Please note that

Exercise 4: Matching

1. resolution → 1

A solution to a problem or an end to a dispute

2. compensation → 2

Something given to make up for a loss or inconvenience

3. grievance → 3

A formal complaint about unfair treatment

4. amendment → 4

A change or addition made to a document or agreement

5. timeline → 5

A schedule showing when stages of a project should be completed

6. rejection → 6

A formal refusal of a proposal, application, or request

7. backlog → 7

A build-up of tasks or work that have not yet been completed

8. authorisation → 8

Official permission given by someone in authority

Exercise 5: Word Sort

Solving problems:

resolution, compensation, objection, grievance

Decisions & permissions:

approval, rejection, authorisation, amendment

Time & progress:

backlog, timeline

Exercise 6: Paragraph Gap Fill

1. ____ the delivery of your order was delayed.

Answer: We regret to inform you that

2. we would like to offer ____ in the form of a discount.

Answer: compensation

3. ____ our Customer Relations Manager, Mr David Park.

Answer: I am writing on behalf of

4. He has reviewed your ____ and confirmed it meets the criteria.

Answer: grievance

5. any refund will require ____ from our finance department.

Answer: authorisation

6. ____, as we would like to resolve this matter quickly.

Answer: We would appreciate your earliest response