

4.1 Formal purpose and audience

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 16 marks

KEY WORDS formal 正式 • polite 礼貌 • purpose 目的 • grateful 感激
• formal purpose and audience 正式的目的与读者

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **formal purpose and audience** 正式的目
的与读者 — writing to someone in an official role, for a reason that requires them to act.

You must be able to:

- decide when a task requires formal writing
- state your purpose clearly in the opening sentence
- keep a polite, businesslike tone even when complaining

1 Worked examples

■ When a task is formal

The reader is acting in a **role**, not as a friend: a manager, a head teacher, a company, a newspaper editor, an official you have never met.

Typical formal purposes:

- **Applying** for a job, a place or a position
- **Complaining** about a product or a service
- **Requesting** information, permission or action
- **Suggesting** a change to someone with the power to make it

■ Say why you are writing in sentence one

I am writing to apply for the position of volunteer guide advertised in the June newsletter.

I am writing to complain about a jacket purchased from your Riverside branch on 3 May.

A reader who has to reach paragraph three to discover the purpose is already less likely to help you.

■ **Complaining without losing the reader**

- State the facts first: what, when, where, and any order or reference number.
- Describe the problem plainly, without exaggeration.
- Say what you want: a refund, a replacement, an apology, an explanation.
- Stay polite. *I would be grateful if* achieves more than *I demand*, and it is what the register requires.

■ **Greeting and sign-off must match**

Greeting	Sign-off
Dear Mr Osei / Dear Ms Chen	Yours sincerely
Dear Sir or Madam	Yours faithfully

2 Practice

2.1 For each task, state whether formal or informal writing is required, and give the reason. [3]

- (a) An email to the local library asking whether they lend musical instruments.

- (b) A message to your cousin about a birthday present.

- (c) A letter to a newspaper about traffic near your school.

2.2 Write an opening sentence for each formal task. [2]

- (a) Requesting permission to use the school hall for a concert.

- (b) Complaining that a delivery arrived two weeks late and damaged.
