**Academic Writing Style – Mini Test**

**1. Colloquialisms.** *Make the following more formal and less ‘chatty’:*

1. In this day and age, websites are one of the most significant public faces of any organisation.
2. The long–term prospects for the educational service are looking fairly bleak at this moment in time.
3. The authorities announced that they would not tolerate drugs within the sport in any way, shape, or form.

**2. Objectivity.** *Make the following more impersonal:*

(a) I think that Maslow’s theory is not very well thought out because he did not work with large groups of participants.

(b) In my opinion the book says that ‘authority is a key aspect of social conformity’.

(c) In this paper I will explore Bowlby’s theories of attachment.

**3. Caution.** *Make these less certain and more cautious:*

(a) The above graph demonstrates that a greater number of employees worked flexible hours within the organisation in 2017 than they did in any preceding year. This clearly shows that people in the UK prefer to vary their work patterns.

(b) Nagel obviously thinks that consciousness is a separate entity from our minds, because no matter how many facts we know about bats, we still do not know what it feels like to *be* one.

(c ) Klofstad argues that citizens dislike political conflict (2013). However, this is patently untrue as evidenced by the popularity of arguing about politics on Twitter.

**4. Conciseness.** *Make these less convoluted and more concise:*

(a) The social psychologists Stanley Milgram in 1961 and Philip Zimbardo in 1971 conducted significant experiments on social influence on obedient behaviour.

(b) Sanderson (1963) was motivated by a report on the trial of the Nazi Adolf Eichman which suggested that the worst evils are often carried out by the most ordinary of people. He wanted to conduct a study to find out if many of those under Nazi influence could have simply been following orders as they had claimed.

(c ) The report on the study found, much to the dismay of the researcher and the observers, that the participants went far beyond the expected levels of obedience.

**Possible solutions:**

*There are several possible solutions to the examples above. The following are not the only options but they are improvements:*

**1. Colloquialisms**

(a) Website use is one of the most significant ways in which companies convey their brands to the public.

(b) The long–term prospects for the educational service currently appear unsustainable.

(c) The authorities announced that they would not tolerate drugs within the sport under any circumstances.

**2. Objectivity**

(a) Maslow can be criticised for focussing his arguments solely on studies of small groups of participants.

(b) Kirby argues that ‘authority is a key aspect of social conformity’ (Kirby, 2000:198).

(c) This paper will explore Bowlby’s theories of attachment.

**3. Caution**

(a) The above graph demonstrates that a greater number of employees worked flexible hours within the organisation in 2017 than they did in any preceding year. What might be driving this change and whether patterns in this organisation reflect wider national trends remains unclear. More research is needed…

(b) Nagel seems to suggest that consciousness is a separate entity from our minds, because no matter how many facts we know about bats, we still do not know what it feels like to *be* one.

(c ) Klofstad argues that citizens dislike political conflict (2013). However, the popularity of arguing about politics on Twitter appears to contradict this view.

**4. Conciseness**

(a) Milgram (1961) and Zimbardo (1971) conducted significant experiments on social influence on obedient behaviour.

(b) Sanderson (1963) hypothesised that individuals often behave in immoral ways simply because they are given orders by authority figures as, for example, may have been the case during the holocaust.

(c) Results demonstrated that participants exceeded expected normal levels of obedience.