

Academic English The same or different

Without looking at the lists below, listen to your teacher read out two or more phrases and raise one of the two cards you were given to show what you think about their meanings.

Are the meanings of the pairs or groups of expressions below the same or different (don't worry about the grammar, just the meaning)?

- A great advantage/ The main advantage
- A great deal of/ A wide range of
- A solution could be/ One possible solution is
- Absolutely critical/ Incredibly important
- Abundant/ Numerous
- Accompanied by/ Together with
- Acknowledge/ Recognise
- And so forth/ And so on
- Apart from/ Except
- Apparent/ Obvious
- Appropriate/ Suitable
- As a rule/ Generally
- As for... / Moving on to...
- As we have seen/ As noted above
- At first/ First of all
- At last/ Lastly
- At the moment/ At that moment
- By 2020/ Until 2020
- Claim/ State
- However/ Nevertheless
- However/ On the other hand
- In contrast/ On the contrary
- It decreased/ It was decreased
- Many people feel that.../ A large number of people think that.../ It is thought by many that.../ There is a widespread belief that.../ A great number of people hold the view that...
- Nonetheless/ Nevertheless/ Even though that is true
- Nowadays/ These days
- One of the advantages/ An advantage
- Solve/ Sort out
- The government is to blame/ The government is responsible
- The points below/ The following points
- i.e./ That is to say
- Consist of/ Be made up of
- To sum up/ In conclusion
- Present/ Current
- Virtually/ Almost completely
- Markedly/ Noticeably
- In spite of/ Despite
- e.g./ Such as
- Approximately/ About



Suggested answers

- A great advantage/ The main advantage – Different. “The main advantage” is number one.
- A great deal of/ A wide range of – Different. “A wide range of” means they are different from each other.
- A solution could be/ One possible solution is – The same.
- Absolutely critical/ Incredibly important – The same.
- Abundant/ Numerous – The same.
- Accompanied by/ Together with – The same.
- Acknowledge/ Recognise – Different. “Recognise” could just be a mental process as well as something done or said.
- And so forth/ And so on – The same.
- Apart from/ Except – The same.
- Apparent/ Obvious – The same.
- Appropriate/ Suitable – The same.
- As a rule/ Generally – The same.
- As for... / Moving on to... - The same.
- As we have seen/ As noted above – The same.
- At first/ First of all – Different. “At first” means it later changed.
- At last/ Lastly – Different. “At last” means after a long wait and is rare in academic language.
- At the moment/ At that moment – Different. Only “At moment” means currently.
- By 2020/ Until 2020 – Different.
- Claim/ State – Different. “Claim” means that people (e.g. the writer) disagree or that there is no proof.
- However/ Nevertheless – Different. “Nevertheless” means “Even though (all) that is true,…”
- However/ On the other hand – Different. “On the other hand” is only used when weighing up two alternatives with the aim of deciding something, i.e. it is leading towards a conclusion.
- In contrast/ On the contrary – Different. “On the contrary” means the previous statement isn’t true.
- It decreased/ It was decreased – Different. “It was decreased” means “by…”
- Many people feel that.../ A large number of people think that.../ It is thought by many that.../ There is a widespread belief that.../ A great number of people hold the view that... - The same.
- Nonetheless/ Nevertheless/ Even though that is true – The same.
- Nowadays/ These days – The same.
- One of the advantages/ An advantage – The same.
- Solve/ Sort out – The same.
- The government is to blame/ The government is responsible – Slightly different. “Responsible” doesn’t necessarily mean it is the government’s fault, but they should still sort it out anyway.
- The points below/ The following points – Different. “Following” means straight after, whereas “below” could be at a much later point.
- i.e./ That is to say – The same.
- Consist of/ Be made up of – The same.



- To sum up/ In conclusion – Different. “To sum up” is just saying the same thing again shorter and with different words, whereas a conclusion is a consequence of what has been written above.
- Present/ Current – The same.
- Virtually/ Almost completely – The same.
- Markedly/ Noticeably – The same.
- In spite of/ Despite – The same.
- e.g./ Such as
- Approximately/ About – The same.

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