

PART TWO

- You are the manager of a hotel which offers conference facilities. You have received a marked-up copy of your advertisement together with a letter of complaint.
- Write a letter of apology referring to the customer's four points and either offering an explanation or outlining what action is to be taken in each case.
- Write 120–140 words.

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1 The technical support was not very good.

2 As to your claim about 'excellent cuisine', I must tell you that the food was often cold.

3 We held our conference in February, i.e. off-season, but we seem to have been charged at peak rates.

4 One last point: when we tried to log on to your website, we got a 'page unavailable' message.

Before you write your letter, go to page 49.

EXAM INFORMATION

In Part Two of the writing test, you have to write 120–140 words in the form of business correspondence (letter, fax or email), a short report or a proposal. Typically, you will have information in the form of:

- written texts, e.g. a note, a letter, a memo, an email
- graphics, e.g. a table, a diagram, a pie chart
- printed matter, e.g. an advertisement, an extract from a catalogue.

Often the texts include someone's handwritten comments or instructions. You have to write an appropriate response combining and/or interpreting the information. In business correspondence, you may have to:

- explain
- reassure
- apologize
- complain.

In a report, you may have to:

- describe
- summarize.

In a proposal, you may have to:

- describe
- recommend
- summarize
- persuade.

A DETAILED STUDY

Here is a procedure for dealing with a complaint:

- 1 give an apology for what should (or should not) have been done
- 2 give an explanation or excuse for what went wrong
- 3 find a way of responding when you have no explanation or excuse.

- 1 Imagine you are the hotel manager. Use the words in brackets to provide explanations or excuses in answer to the following complaints.

- 1 'Your technician seemed to have no experience of Powerpoint presentations.' (*apologize/regular technician ill*)
- 2 'It was difficult to hear people using the stage microphone.' (*agree/needs replacing*)
- 3 'The cashier in reception did not know which rates we had been charged.' (*speak/person concerned/misunderstanding/resolve*)
- 4 'Your website took ages to load, and then crashed on us after two minutes.' (*checked/host server/assured/isolated incident*)
- 5 'The vegetables at dinner were frozen, not fresh.' (*try/provide fresh vegetables in season/otherwise/good quality frozen produce*)
- 6 'We were served by a foreign waiter whose English was terrible.' (*apologize/person no longer works here*)

- 2 Paragraphing and punctuation are important if you want your business correspondence to create a good impression. Add punctuation and paragraphing to the following:

thank you for your letter i am sorry that you were dissatisfied please accept the following explanations our regular technician was ill so the janitor who is not very experienced had to deal with the problem you had with the projector screen as to the food apart from tuesday when there was a brief power cut i do not know of any other problems in the kitchen with regard to your bill you are absolutely right you were invoiced at the peak rate i have arranged for a refund and can only apologize for the oversight despite your difficulty in accessing our website i am assured that there is not usually a problem although the error message you got often occurs when the Internet is busy i can assure you that our website functions perfectly well once again i apologize for our service where it was not up to your expectations

Now write your own answer to Part Two of the writing test. Remember to check for grammar and spelling mistakes.