

# CAE/CPE – Letter of Complaint

## Roleplay 1

### STUDENT A:

You are the manager of *The Paradise Hotel*, a modern holiday resort surrounded by lots of sights and sandy beaches. Everything seems perfect... but you have to deal with some problems.

### STUDENT B:

You are a guest at the expensive *The Paradise Hotel*. When you first arrived you noticed a cockroach running around in the reception area. Additionally, the food is awful. It is often cold and salty, and there are no vegetarian dishes. There is little choice: it seems to be the same every day.

The resort is generally nice, but it is like a graveyard. There is nothing to do, no day trips, no activities, no sports facilities, no nightlife nearby... You are bored.

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## Roleplay 2

### STUDENT B:

You are the manager of *The Lakeside Hotel*, a small holiday resort surrounded by woods and lakes, a very peaceful place. The sun shines every day, and there are many activities offered. Everything seems perfect... but you have to deal with some problems.

### STUDENT A:

You are a guest at the expensive *The Lakeside Hotel*. When you first arrived your room hadn't even been cleaned. Then you realised that you had to pay for internet, but the internet connection at the hotel is overpriced and not always working reliably. Furthermore, there are only 3 different TV channels, which is unacceptable.

The staff members are also unfriendly. A maid refused to change the towels, and you once overheard jokes between the waiters about the guests' personal affairs.

- **No sooner had...than...**
  - o No sooner had I arrived than I saw a rat in the kitchen!
- **Barely/hardly/Scarcely... when**
  - o Barely had I entered my room when I noticed a terrible smell coming from the bathroom.
- **Not only was** there a hair in my wife's soup, **but** the main course **also** arrived cold.
- **Seldom** have I experienced such woeful (terrible) service.
- **Never again** will I stay here.
- **On no account** should this hotel be open to the public.

## Task

You recently took a self-catering holiday in a luxury apartment, but the standard of the accommodation was very poor. The holiday company that you booked with has offered you some vouchers as compensation, but you have decided you would prefer a cash refund instead, since you have no intention of using the company again. Write a letter to the company outlining the problems you experienced with the accommodation and the action you want them to take.

**(CAE 220-260 words - CPE 280-320 words)**

## Opening

- Dear Sir or Madam, / To whom it may concern,
- I am writing to express my disappointment with/dissatisfaction with the service I received in...
- I would like to lodge a formal complaint against your company for the reasons outlined below:
- I feel compelled to write to you in order to describe the

## Listing Problems

- First of all,
- No sooner had...than... / Barely/hardly/Scarcely... when
  - No sooner had I arrived than I saw a rat in the kitchen!
  - Barely had I entered my room when I noticed a terrible smell coming from the bathroom.
- **Not only was** there a hair in my wife's soup, **but** the main course **also** arrived cold.
- On top of that...
- As if that was not enough...
- To top it all off...
- The straw that broke the camel's back was...

## Complaining Expressions

- The standard of the... was not up to scratch.
- **Seldom have I** experienced such woeful (terrible) service.
- The... left a lot to be desired.
- The... failed to live up to our expectations.
- We were left bitterly disappointed by...
- **Never again will I** stay here.
- **On no account should** this hotel be open to the public.
- The... was an absolute disgrace. (v.strong)
- Overall, our visit to your (restaurant/ hotel etc) was an unmitigated disaster from start to finish.

### Requesting Action

- It seems only fair that you should... (offer a full refund)
- I would appreciate it if you...
- I would be grateful if you...
- **Should these demands not be met**, you will be hearing from my lawyers.
- I expect to receive compensation to the tune of (€2000) for the...

### Making Recommendations

- I strongly recommend that your organisation...
- It would be advisable to...
- I suggest re-evaluating your procedures regarding...

### Sign off

- I look forward to receiving your reply.
- I expect to receive a prompt reply to this letter.
- Yours faithfully,