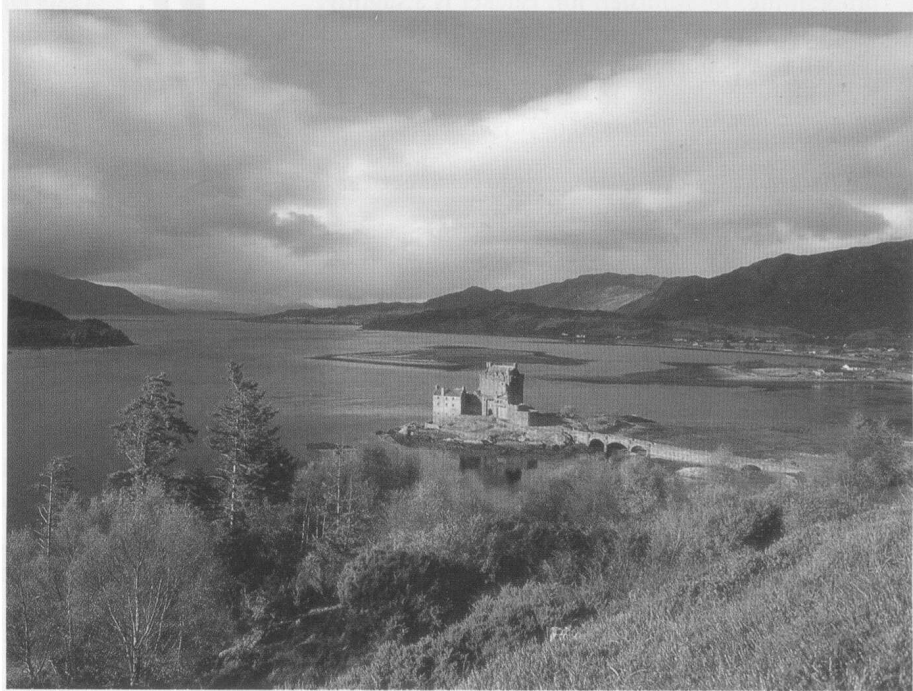


**Key success factors**

- being able to summarize the issue clearly
- maintaining an assertive but respectful tone
- being clear and reasonable about what you expect to be done

**ANALYSING A MODEL TEXT**

- a Have you ever had a very bad experience at a restaurant or a hotel? What happened? Did you make a complaint either in person or in writing? What response did you get?
- b Read the model letter. What exactly is the complaint about?
- c With a partner discuss which phrase is better for each gap and why.
- a I'm sorry to say  
b I am afraid to say
  - a did not live up to our expectations  
b was a complete disaster
  - a was supposed to provide  
b was going to give us
  - a it didn't happen  
b this was not the case
  - a fed up  
b dissatisfied
  - a we were told  
b they told us
  - a to our great disappointment  
b really irritatingly
  - a a pack of lies  
b totally inaccurate and misleading
  - a we are owed an apology  
b you ought to say sorry
  - a some form of compensation  
b a lot of money back



Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to complain about a three-night holiday to Scotland we booked through your company. <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ that the *Highland Dreams* (booking reference LG61367) <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ and did not reflect the description on your website.

According to your website, the hotel where we stayed <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ an evening entertainment programme, which was described as being 'varied and fun packed'. Unfortunately, <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ and it left us and the other guests feeling extremely <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_.

On the first evening, there was a comedian. However, not only was he not funny at all, but he also told racist jokes, and many guests left during his performance. When we complained to the hotel management <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ that 'we did not have a sense of humour'. On the second day, according to the programme, we were going to be taught some traditional Scottish dances, which sounded more promising, but <sup>7</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, the event was cancelled at the last minute without any explanation being given. The final night's entertainment was a 'Karaoke Evening', which was a complete failure as most of the guests were elderly people who were too embarrassed to sing in public.

I feel strongly that the description of the entertainment programme on your website should be changed as it is <sup>8</sup>\_\_\_\_\_. We were extremely disappointed by this aspect of our holiday and in the circumstances we believe that <sup>9</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ and we should receive <sup>10</sup>\_\_\_\_\_.

I look forward to hearing your views on this matter.

Yours faithfully,

**USEFUL LANGUAGE**

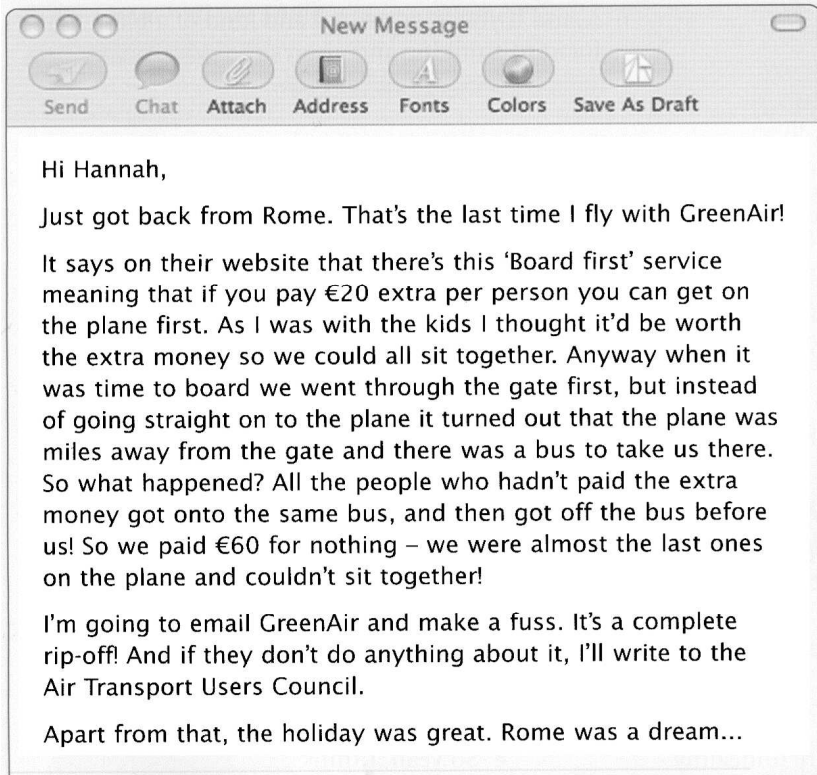
d Without looking back at the letter, try to remember how the writer expressed the following in a more formal way.

- 1 In this letter I want to complain...  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 It said on your website...  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 The comedian was not funny at all and told racist jokes.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 I really think that you should change the description on your website...  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 I'd like to know what you think about this.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLANNING WHAT TO WRITE**

**Brainstorm the content**

a Read part of an email to Hannah from a friend. What exactly is the 'Board first' service? What problem did she have?



b You are going to write the email to GreenAir. With a partner...

- underline the relevant information in the email.
- summarize exactly what it is that you are dissatisfied with.
- think of reasons why your complaint is justified.
- discuss what would be reasonable for GreenAir to do to compensate you for the inconvenience.
- decide what other details you think might be important to include in the email, e.g. the date and the flight number, and invent them.

**TIPS** for writing an email or letter of complaint

- Make a note of all the relevant details you want to include before you start drafting your email.
- Decide what action you want the person you are writing to to take.
- Use appropriate expressions for opening and closing the email.
- Use a formal style, and be clear and assertive but not aggressive.
- Try to use a variety of expressions for generalizing and making suggestions.
- Use the passive, e.g. *we were told*, *we are owed an apology*, etc. to make it more impersonal or to make it clear that you are not accusing individuals.

**WRITING**

You are going to write an email to the airline. It should be approximately 250 words.

**DRAFT** your email, explaining why you are writing, what the complaint relates to, giving the details, and asking for some action from the airline.

**EDIT** the email, making sure you are happy with the content and tone throughout, and making sure it is the right length.

**CHECK** the email for mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and register.