



A Letter of Complaint: Sample Letter

Flat A, 3/F
Nice View Garden
56 King's Road
Hong Kong
20th March, 2010

☐☐☐

Airway Pacific
12 Ship Street
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

☐☐

Dear Sir/Madam,

☐

I am writing to complain about the poor treatment I received from a member of your airline's cabin crew.

☐

I was one of the passengers who took flight CA012 from Hong Kong International Airport to Heathrow Airport on 2nd March, 2010.

☐

Shortly after the plane took off, a cabin crew member named Sandy Lee spilled drinks on me. Normally, it would have been a small matter but she acted as if nothing had happened. She walked away without an apology. When I complained to her, she told me to behave or else she would tell the captain that I was causing trouble on the plane.

☐

I am extremely upset by her unreasonable behaviour. Her tone of voice was rude and arrogant.

☐

Your airline is a reputable airline and you pride yourself on providing excellent service to customers. What I experienced on your plane was far from the truth. I think I deserve an apology for the rude treatment I received from your staff member.

☐

I hope you will investigate this matter as soon as possible. I look forward to your reply.

☐

Yours faithfully,

☐

Mary Wong

☐

Mary Wong



A Letter of Complaint: Content

Read the letter and answer the following questions.

1. What type of letter is it?
☐ letter of application ☐ letter of invitation ☐ letter of complaint
2. What is the letter about?
☐ a complaint about a **product** produced by Airway Pacific
☐ a complaint about the **service** provided by Airway Pacific
3. Fill in the following table.



Sender's name	
Sender's address	
Date of letter of complaint	
Name of company	
Company address	
Recipient's name	

4. What is Mary complaining about?

5. Who was Mary?
☐ a pilot ☐ a passenger ☐ a cabin crew member

6. Which flight did Mary take?

7. Where did the flight fly from and fly to?

8. When did she take the flight?

9. When did the accident happen?

10. What was the name of the cabin crew member?

11. What did Sandy Lee do on Mary?

12. What did Sandy Lee do afterwards?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

13. What happened to Sandy when Mary complained to her?

14. How did Mary feel?

15. How was Sandy's behaviour?

16. What was Sandy's tone of voice?

17. What is the airline proud of?

18. What did Mary deserve?

19. What does Mary expect Airway Pacific to do?



A Letter of Complaint: Format

Can you find the following sections in the letter?

- Put A, B, C etc. next to the part of the letter of complaint that matches the section below. (A) has been done for you in the letter as an example.
- Put the sections in the correct order in the task sheet below. (1) has been done for you as an example.

		Correct order
A	Company address	
B	Showing the reason for writing	
C	Sender's name	
D	Giving background information (e.g., who you are)	
E	Stating the demands (i.e., what you want)	
F	Greeting	
G	Signature	
H	Closing	
I	Describing the feeling (i.e., explaining why you are unhappy)	
J	Date of letter of complaint	
K	Sender's address	1
L	Describing the complaint (i.e., giving details)	
M	Name of company	
N	Final expression expressing expectation	



☺ A letter of complaint is always written in **formal language**, and it usually consists of the following structure:

- ☒ stating _____
- ☒ describing factually _____
- ☒ explaining _____
- ☒ giving suggestions on _____

A Letter of Complaint: Useful Phrases

Look at the list of useful phrases (A – H) Mary uses in her letter. What kind of meaning do they express? Match the phrases with the correct functions (1 – 8).

1	Greeting	
2	Showing the reason for writing	
3	Giving background information	
4	Describing the complaint	
5	Describing the feeling	
6	Stating the demands	
7	Expressing expectation	
8	Closing	

A	<p>■ Your airline is a reputable airline and you pride yourself on</p> <p>* <i>pride yourself on</i> + (v-ing) + (noun)</p> <p>■ What I experienced on your plane was far from the truth.</p> <p>■ I think I deserve</p> <p>* <i>I deserve</i> + (noun)</p>
B	<p>■ I am writing to complain about</p> <p>* <i>complain about</i> + (noun)</p>
C	<p>■ Dear Sir/Madam,</p>
D	<p>■ a cabin crew member named XXX</p> <p>* [a period of time], <i>a cabin crew member named</i> + [name] + (verb) + (noun)</p> <p>■ Normally, it would have been a small matter but</p> <p>* <i>but</i> + (subject) + (verb)</p> <p>■ She walked away without</p> <p>* <i>without</i> + (noun)</p> <p>■ When I complained to her, she told me to</p> <p>* <i>she told me to</i> + (verb)</p>
E	<p>■ I am one of the who took flight from to on</p> <p>* <i>one of the</i> + (plural noun)</p> <p>* <i>from</i> + [place] + <i>to</i> + [place] + <i>on</i> + [date]</p>
F	<p>■ Yours faithfully,</p>
G	<p>■ I hope you will as soon as possible.</p> <p>* <i>you will</i> + (verb) + (noun)</p> <p>■ I look forward to your reply.</p>
H	<p>■ I am by</p> <p>* <i>I am</i> + [feeling] + <i>by</i> + [behaviour]</p> <p>■ Her tone of voice was</p> <p>* <i>Her tone of voice was</i> + (adjective)</p>

A Letter of Complaint: Text Reconstruction

Flat _____
Nice _____
56 _____
Hong _____
20th _____

Hong Kong

Dear _____,

I am writing to _____
I received from a member of your airline's _____.

I was one of the _____ who took flight _____ from _____
_____ to _____ on _____.

Shortly after _____, a cabin crew member named _____
_____ spilled _____ on me. Normally, it would have been a _____
_____ but she acted as if _____.
She _____ without an _____. When I complained to
her, _____ or else she would tell
the _____ that _____.

I am _____ by her _____ behaviour. Her
tone of voice was _____.

Your airline is a reputable airline and you pride yourself on
_____. What I experienced on your
plane was _____. I think I _____
for _____ I received from your staff member.

I hope you will _____.
I _____ to your _____.

_____,

Mary Wong

Mary Wong