MATURA WRITING TASKS

FORMAL LETTER – COMPLAINT

Level C1

Your goal at C1: Write a precise, cohesive complaint that is assertive yet impeccably courteous. Build a persuasive case, escalate tone with control, and demand redress with authority.

C1 · PHASE 1 – PRECISION & COLLOCATION

Replace each phrase with a precise, high-level collocation, then use it in a sentence.

1 say sorry properly → _____
2 give my money back → _____
3 did not do what they promised → _____
4 a very bad service → _____
5 deal with the problem → _____
6 make up for the trouble → _____

TASK: Add five advanced collocations of your own relevant to complaints.

C1 · PHASE 2 – AVOIDING WEAK OR AGGRESSIVE OPENINGS

These openings are either too weak or too aggressive. Rewrite each as a controlled, authoritative sentence.

1 I'm really angry and I want to complain.
2 I'm sorry to bother you but something went wrong.
3 Your company is a complete disgrace.
4 I just wanted to let you know I wasn't very happy.

C1 · THE STRUCTURE YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARDS

Study this plan before you start. Every task in this booklet helps you fill one part of it. Keep it beside you as you write.

A FORMAL LETTER OF COMPLAINT — STRUCTURE

Your address + date (top right)
Where you are writing from

↓

Recipient's name & address (left)
The company / manager you are writing to

↓

Greeting
Dear Sir or Madam,

↓

Para 1 — Reason for writing
What you bought / the service, when & where

↓

Para 2 — The problem(s)
Describe clearly what went wrong + details

↓

Para 3 — The consequences
How the problem affected you

↓

Para 4 — What you want
The action / compensation you request

↓

Para 5 — Closing
Deadline for reply + polite firm final line

↓

Sign-off
Yours faithfully,

↓

Full name
Dominik / Dominika Novak

C1 · PHASE 3 – BUILDING THE CASE

Turn the incident into a persuasive case. Each point must move through the full chain:

Element	What to include
Fact	exactly what was promised vs. delivered
Evidence	dates, amounts, references, prior contact
Breach	the standard or agreement that was not met
Impact	the concrete effect on you
Redress	the specific remedy you are entitled to

Write two developed sentences (or short paragraphs) presenting your strongest two grievances as evidence, not emotion.

C1 · PHASE 4 – ADVANCED STRUCTURES

Write one polished sentence of each, integrated naturally (not mechanical).

- a participle clause (Having paid in full, I…)
- an inversion (At no point was I informed that…)
- a cleft sentence (What I find unacceptable is…)
- a concessive clause (While I appreciate that…, I…)
- a nominalisation (The failure to deliver… resulted in…)
- a modal of expectation (I would expect a company of your standing to…)

C1 · PHASE 5 – CONTROLLED TONE

A C1 complaint is assertive without being rude. Rewrite each so it is firm, precise and courteous.

1. Your service is a joke and you know it.
2. I'll take my business elsewhere, obviously.
3. This is 100% your fault and you must pay.
4. I've never been treated so badly in my life.

C1 · PHASE 6 – COHESION & VOICE

Combine your strongest points into one 100-word body paragraph. It must:

- flow through varied cohesive devices (referencing, substitution, linkers)
- maintain a consistent, assertive but respectful register
- escalate logically from fact to grievance to demand
- read as one argument, not a list of separate complaints

C1 · PHASE 7 – CONTROLLED OPENING & CLOSING

Opening: establish the transaction, your standing as a customer, and the nature of the failure in one authoritative paragraph.

Closing: specify the redress you require, impose a reasonable deadline, and signal the consequence of inaction — all with impeccable courtesy.

C1 · FINAL WRITING TASK

LUXURY WEEKEND BREAK – COMPLAINT

You booked a 'luxury spa weekend' through **Elite Escapes**, advertised as a five-star hotel with a private spa, fine dining and a sea view, for €640. On arrival you were downgraded to a three-star hotel with no spa access, the restaurant was closed for renovation, and your room overlooked a car park. Staff dismissed your concerns and the company has not responded to your follow-up. Write to Mr Richard Vance, Managing Director, Elite Escapes.

Write a **formal letter of complaint (170–180 words)** to Mr Vance in which you:

- set out precisely what was promised and what was delivered
- present your grievances as evidence, not emotion
- convey the impact and your dissatisfaction with authority
- demand specific redress, set a deadline, and signal your next step.

Your letter should read as precise, cohesive and assertive throughout, while remaining impeccably courteous.