

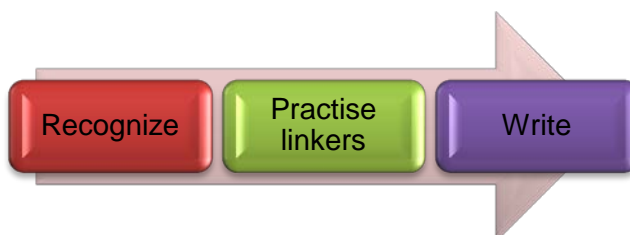
# Write it!

## Cambridge B2 Business Vantage writing task: REPORT

Focus skill: organising text

Task and sample answer are extracted from the Handbook for Teachers (Business Certificates).

Main lesson steps:



### **Recognize:**

Lead-in to the topic – exercise 1

Lead-in to the task, checking understanding of main requirements and generating ideas – exercise 2.  
Possible ideas to improve delivery: optimise warehouse software and processes / find new logistics partner etc; possible ideas to improve quality: introduce new quality checks / introduce full training to team leaders responsible for quality checks / find new suppliers of raw materials and parts etc.

Recognize linking ideas and retrieve text plan – exercises 3-4. Explain that the text is a candidate answer, so it's not perfect, but it was rewarded in the exam with the maximum mark for Organisation.

Suggested elements that help reconstruct the text: knowledge of text genre (e.g. start by saying what the report aims to do), logic (first fact, then reason), but also cohesive devices used to order ideas (firstly, secondly, finally). There are also good link words between sentences in each paragraph.

Suggested main idea table: Paragraph 2: Computer system problem in February; Paragraph 3: Reasons for complaints – wrong delivery; paragraph 4: Reasons for complaints – late delivery; Paragraph 5: Reasons for complaints – quality.

### **Practise linkers:** Exercise 5

Suggested answers: a) The computer system crashed this month, that is why we have a record number of complaints. b) Although complaints fell back under 300 this month, it is clear that we still have problems with the product quality. c) As soon as the software was updated, the situation improved considerably. d) Incorrect delivery, as well as the delays in the delivery caused the complaints. e) The report presents the trend in the complaints over the past three months along with their reasons. f) To sum up / In conclusion, the measures we are introducing will hopefully reduce the complaints number even further.

### **Write:** Exercise 6

Optional: chain writing. Each student writes the first paragraph on a loose piece of paper. Then they give the paper to another class mate, who has to continue the text with the second paragraph, which has to be properly linked to what the first student has already written. The chain is continued until the text is completed. The challenge may be that the ideas that they have planned to include may not easily fit in with what has already been written by the others. It will be up to them whether they stick to their plan, or write something else to fit the existing flow of ideas.

You can re-use these pieces of writing if you photocopy them and discuss organisation skills with a different class.

## Organising and linking ideas

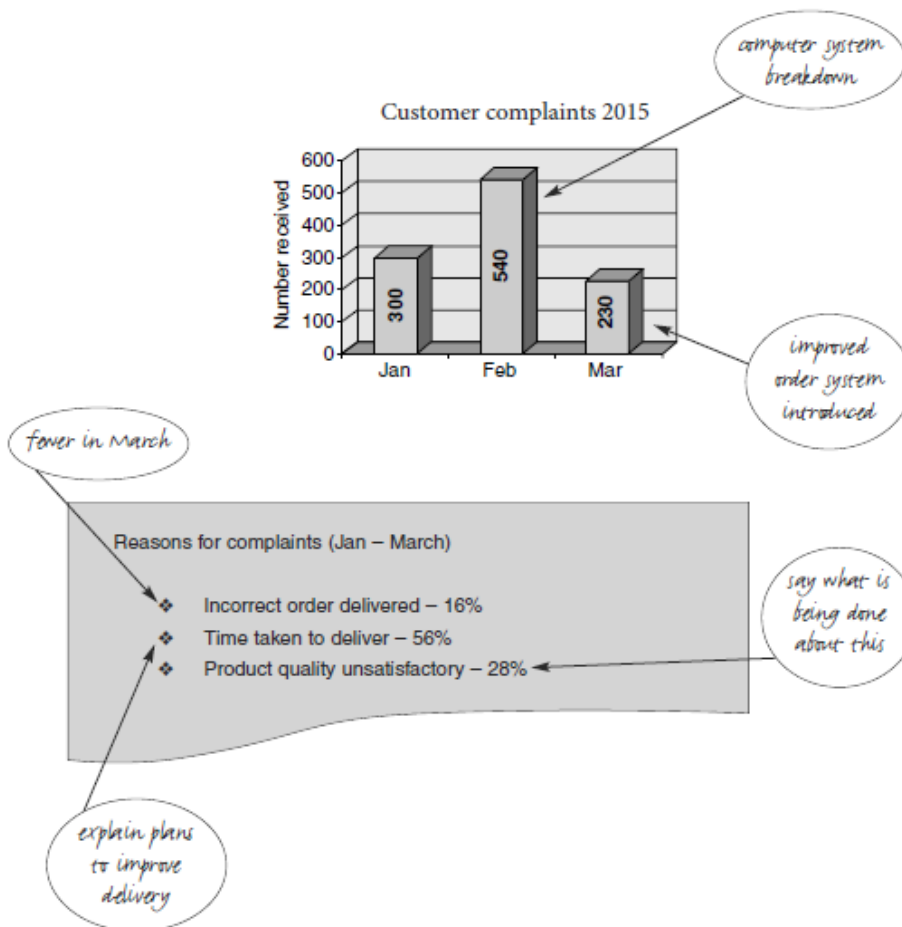
1. Have you ever complained to a company about its product/service? What was your complaint about?

Think of products/services that you typically buy, online or in a shop. What do customers usually complain about, concerning those products/services?

What could be some of the possible internal circumstances that created the situations the customers complain about?

2. Here is a report to write to your line manager. What will your line manager need to understand from your report?

- You work in the Customer Services Department of a mail-order company. You have been asked to prepare a short report for your line manager about complaints.
- Look at the information below, on which you have already made some handwritten notes.
- Then, using all your handwritten notes, write your report.
- Write 120 – 140 words.



What could your company do to improve delivery? What can be done about the unsatisfactory product quality (think of a specific measure)?

3. This is a report written under the instructions above, but unfortunately the paragraphs got jumbled up on the computer. Put them back in order so that the report makes sense.

*Secondly, an excessive time for delivery led to 56% of complaints. The whole delivery system will be reviewed in order to solve the problem.*

We can point out 3 main reasons for these complaints. Firstly, 10% of them were due to incorrect deliveries. In particular, March saw fewer complaints.

*Complaints in January stood at 300, but in February the number rocketed to 540 because of a computer system breakdown. Finally, after introducing some improvement in the order system the number of complaints fell back to 230.*

This report deals with the number of customer's complaints between January 2006 and March 2006 as well as with reasons for those complaints.

*Finally, 28% of complaints were due to a lack of quality in our products. This will be solved by setting up a new quality section in our process.*

Go back to the text and underline the words that helped you order the paragraphs. Is there anything else that guided you?

4. How is this report organised? Fill in this table. The complete text is below.

Paragraph 1	<i>Purpose of the report</i>
Paragraph 2	
Paragraph 3	
Paragraph 4	
Paragraph 5	<i>Quality problems and solution</i>

This report deals with the number of customer's complaints between January 2015 and March 2015 as well as with reasons for those complaints.

Complaints in January stood at 300, but in February the number rocketed to 540 because of a computer system breakdown. Finally, after introducing some improvement in the order system the number of complaints fell back to 230.

We can point out 3 main reasons for these complaints. Firstly, 10% of them were due to incorrect deliveries. In particular, March saw fewer complaints.

Secondly, an excessive time for delivery led to 56% of complaints. The whole delivery system will be reviewed in order to solve the problem.

Finally, 28% of complaints were due to a lack of quality in our products. This will be solved by setting up a new quality section in our process.

5. Rephrase these statements using different words or phrases than the ones underlined. You may have to split them into two separate sentences, or merge them into one.

Because of the computer system crash we have a record number of complaints this month.

.....

Complaints fell back under 300 this month. However, it's clear that we still have problems with the product quality.

.....

After updating the software the situation improved considerably.

.....

One reason for the complaints was the incorrect delivery. Another was the delays in the delivery.

.....

The report presents the trend in the complaints over the past three months, and the reasons for the complaints too.

.....

To conclude, the measures we are introducing will hopefully reduce the complaints number even further.

.....

6. Here is a new report to write. Make a plan of
- How to group ideas in paragraphs, and in what order
  - How to start and finish
  - What ideas you will have to input yourself.

The company you work for is developing a new product and needs to finance this. A group of investors called Venture Enterprises has sent you some information.

Look at the information below, on which you have already made some handwritten notes.

Then, using **all** your handwritten notes, write a **letter** to George Rodich.

Write 120–140 words.

