**Sample corrected student work   
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\* The following is an edited and corrected writing assignment given to an intermediate-advanced level client who would be practicing letter writing in preparation for a Cambridge exam. This sample practice writing is not the same as, but similar to, the type of writing asked for on a typical Cambridge exam.  
  
**Exercise One  
Writing task assignment**: Letter of complaint   
In this extended exercise, you will write a response to the following task and have it prepared and ready for the next lesson.

*Last weekend you and a friend went on a three-day course at a sports centre some distance from your home. You were supposed to spend the days learning a new sport and the nights in a luxury hotel. However, there were a number of problems with the weekend--concerning both the accommodation and the sports training. You rang the company organising the holiday to complain and they asked you to send in a detailed letter, informing them exactly what the problems were and explaining what you feel they should do about the situation.*

*In 150 words or more, write your reply.*

***Lesson response***   
[Original client sample, which is a written response to the task that has been edited]  
  
**Writing task assignment:** Letter of complaint  
Client name  
Date  
  
  
Dear Sir or Madam,

Last Saturday, I and my friend Erik were in your sports center. We should take a course of golf and were supposed to live in the suite with the balcony. Unfortunately, our holiday was really different from how we \_\_ imagine it.

Firstly, the suite were we should stay, was occupied, and we need to take other room, which facing to the street side and was really noisy. After this, we discovered what your company forgot to \_\_ notice to \_\_ golf instructor, what we would come, so he didn’t came for this weekend. And finally, then we went to \_\_swimming pool area?, to get some sun and wanted to use the gym, we were asked to pay for it! After all those faults that \_\_happened, I was very disappointed.

I hardly recommend to you to check you service staff in you company, because it produces \_ very bad impression on the visitors of you center. Transition word needed, I will never advise this sports center for any of my friends.

Yours sincerely.

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\* As we go over the underlined areas of the client’s writing that need correcting, we will also have a mini-grammar/lexicon lesson – pointed out in the notes below – that directly refer to the strengths and weaknesses of the particular client’s writing skills.  
   
NOTES

1. Always place a comma after a transition word or phrase
2. Always place the other person’s name before the ‘I’ in the sentence
3. Use the proper preposition: location = at / within = in
4. When retelling a story or something that has occurred, always use the past tense
5. Make sure you use the right word choices; e.g. visitors stay somewhere, not live
6. Regarding the use of articles ‘the’ and ‘a’: use ‘the’ when talking about one specific thing; use ‘a’ when talking about something in general. For example, ‘a suite’ = one of many; ‘the suite’ = the only suite
7. Use the proper tense; e.g. ‘we imagine’ = something you are imagining now about something in the future, but ‘we had imagined’ = something you had imagined in the past
8. Again, check proper tense usage: ‘the suite were we should stay’ ≠ a sentence that is understood. Instead, it should read: ‘the suite WHERE we were\_?\_(registered / supposed) to stay
9. Please do NOT confuse the word ‘that’ with ‘what’, as they do not mean the same thing
10. Incorrect usage of the modal ‘would’ come that suggests a possibility with ‘were coming’, stating a definite plan of action
11. When using the helping verbs + action verb, the action verb is always in the infinitive form; so, ‘did came’ is incorrect English…‘did come’ is correct
12. Place combined verbs - such as ‘to get and use’ - in the same tense
13. Delete unnecessary words: e.g., ‘those faults’ are redundant and do not adding anything to ‘After all that had happened…’
14. The word ‘produces’ = something made and is the wrong word choice. Instead, show that something ‘gives’ or ‘leaves’ a bad impression. Then begin your last sentence with a transition to show a shift in thought; e.g. ‘As it is’, ‘If this situation does not change’, etc..
15. Please close with a comma: Yours sincerely, / Yours truly, / Regards, / etc.

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**Exercise Three**  
\* We close with a sample edited modal text, where I have used the client’s own words as much as possible. The client reads this exercise aloud and compares the modal with his or her own written response while we discuss similarities and differences.

This last exercise is used to further pinpoint particular strengths and weaknesses that cater to the client’s personal needs.

[Sample edited modal text]  
  
Dear Sir or Madam,

Last Saturday, my friend Erik and I were at your sports center where we took a course on golfing while staying at your facilities that included a suite with a balcony. Unfortunately, our holiday was really different from how we had imagined it.

Firstly, the suite where we were supposed to stay was occupied, and we needed to take another room, which faced the street and was really noisy. After this, when we came to our golf lesson, we discovered that your company forgot to give notice to the golf instructor that we were coming. So, he didn’t show up for any of lessons for the weekend course. And finally, when we went to the swimming pool area to get some sun and use the gym, we were asked to pay for it! After all that had happened, I was very disappointed.

I strongly recommend you to check your company’s service staff, because it is leaving a very bad impression on the visitors of your sports center. As it is, I will never recommend it to any of my friends.

Yours sincerely,