



Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

**READING TEST 9<sup>th</sup> FORM VARIANT 1**

**part 1**

**Read the text below about handling complaints. For each question (1-6) on the opposite page choose the correct answer. Mark one letter (A,B or C). Transfer answers to answer-sheet ( the form on a separate page).**

## Handling Complaints

Big companies have a special department to deal with customer complaints. Complaints can often be handled 'on the spot', that is, at the time of purchase. If it is just a matter of changing or exchanging goods, the sales assistant can deal with it. Some problems are more complicated: damaged goods, a request for a refund or a complaint about staff rudeness. At this point a Supervisor or someone from Customer Services is usually called in. But if the matter still cannot be solved, which is usually because the customer refuses to listen or to accept the offered solution, it is referred to someone higher up, such as the Store Manager. Or, if the store is part of a national chain, the complaint will be dealt with by Head Office.

The policy of the big chain stores is: 'Accept that things can go wrong and put them right.' They sell a billion items a year and they know that not all their goods are going to be perfect. They accept, therefore, that most (if not all) customer complaints are justified.

It's all about customer loyalty. What if a store refuses to listen to a customer's complaint (whether justified or unjustified)? The store then has an unhappy customer, but has done nothing to make that customer happy again. That customer will not come back. But if the store listens politely, checks the problem, and then offers a replacement or a refund, with an apology if needed, the customer will remain loyal.

A recent survey shows that customer complaints are increasing. The commonest complaint is about staff who are unhelpful, usually because they know little about the product they are selling. The second thing that makes customers angry is having to wait too long to be served. Recently, many retailers have cut running costs by employing fewer staff, so there simply aren't enough sales assistants or staff at the checkout desks.

It is not clear why complaints are on the increase. Maybe standards of service are going down, but the more likely explanation is that people are readier to complain nowadays. Citizens' Charters, telling people what they can expect and what to do if they are dissatisfied, have produced a generation of customers who know their rights and not afraid to demand them.

1

What can be offered on the spot if a customer complains?

- A** a full refund of the purchase price
- B** a replacement of the original item
- C** an apology for impolite behaviour

2

A complaint would be referred to the Store Manager or Head Office when

- A** a customer remains dissatisfied.
- B** a customer has been overcharged.
- C** a customer has been rude to staff.

3

The big chain stores accept a customer's complaint because

- A** they accept that there will always be some damaged or faulty goods.
- B** they believe 'the customer is always right'.
- C** only a small percentage of imperfect goods are returned.

4

According to the writer, a store can keep its customers happy by

- A** agreeing with them whether they are right or wrong.
- B** referring them to Head Office in serious cases.
- C** always taking notice of their complaints.

5

According to the writer, why does it often take so long to get served?

- A** Staff don't know enough to answer customers' questions.
- B** There are not enough checkout desks in most stores.
- C** Stores have reduced the number of sales staff.

6

The writer believes there are more customer complaints these days because

- A** people are more aware of their rights than they used to be.
- B** young people are more likely to complain than older people.
- C** stores don't listen to what their customers are telling them.