

## **The complaint**

Miss C complains that Zopa Bank Limited incorrectly sent her personal information to a third-party.

## **What happened**

In March 2023, Miss C says she went to purchase a car at a dealership. The dealership did a finance check for her using Zopa as the lender. Miss C says she went back to the dealership, and the salesperson said they had been receiving emails from Zopa in relation to Miss C's credit card account.

Miss C says she contacted Zopa to let them know that a third party was receiving information about her credit card account. Miss C says that her card was blocked without her knowledge and no one at Zopa contacted her to let her know this was going to happen. Miss C adds that she's made several calls to Zopa to sort the situation out. She's said that even when she let Zopa know, it didn't change the email address back on her account and the third-party continued to get emails that were meant for her. Miss C adds that Zopa's mistake in sharing her personal details with a third-party has impacted her emotionally and financially.

Zopa responded to Miss C's complaint and upheld it. It agreed that a mistake had been made where it incorrectly updated the email address on her credit card account to the third-party email address. Once it received notification of this, it suspended the use of Miss C's card and carried out a fraud investigation. It said that the communication it sent about this was also sent to the third-party. Zopa agreed that the service it provided had fallen short, and so it offered Miss C £100 to say sorry. Miss C didn't think the £100 was reflective of what had happened and so she referred the matter to this service.

Once the complaint was referred to this service, and before an Investigator looked into matters, Zopa let this service know that it wanted to offer a further £100 to Miss C, so £200 in total. Miss C didn't accept Zopa's offer, and so the Investigator considered what both parties had said.

The Investigator thought the complaint should be upheld. They agreed that Miss C's card had been blocked for too long and that information shouldn't have been sent to a third-party. The Investigator didn't think the information sent to the third-party meant that Miss C's account could have been compromised. The Investigator felt that a total of £300 was a fair way to settle things.

Miss C accepted the Investigator's view, but Zopa didn't. It said no sensitive information was shared when the email address was changed in error. However, it accepted it would have been stressful and frustrating when Miss C was unable to use her credit card. It said the issue was resolved within three weeks and the block on the credit card removed, so there was no further detrimental impact on her. Because of this, it felt an award of £200 was reasonable.

Because an agreement couldn't be reached the complaint has been passed to me to decide on the matter.

### **What I've decided – and why**

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having considered all of the evidence available to me, I will be upholding Miss C's complaint.

I don't think it's in dispute here that Zopa made a mistake in updating the email address on Miss C's account to that of a third-party. It also doesn't appear to be in dispute that Zopa restricted the use of the card for around three weeks and Miss C had to make a number of calls to Zopa to sort the matter out. Understandably Miss C has been left feeling concerned and frustrated with what's happened.

Given that the facts of the matter aren't in dispute, what is left for me to decide is if Zopa has done enough to put things right for Miss C and I don't think it has. It is my decision that an award of £300 would be more appropriate in the circumstances for the following reasons:

- Zopa updated Miss C's email address without her consent. This led to emails being sent to a third-party. Zopa have said the emails didn't contain any sensitive information other than Miss C's name. While I'm persuaded the emails didn't contain much personal information, it did contain Miss C's name, and information about her minimum payment due, when it was due and her last statement balance. I don't think this is appropriate information to be sending to a third-party. And I can understand the situation must have been very concerning and embarrassing for Miss C given the circumstances in which she was notified of what happened – by the person in the dealership who had received the emails.
- Zopa then restricted the use of Miss C's credit card while it conducted a fraud investigation. It doesn't appear it told Miss C it had blocked her account and it took around three weeks for the matter to be sorted out – which I find to be too long in the circumstances. It appears the fraud investigation, which led to the blocking of the account, was a direct result of the email address having been changed by Zopa in error.
- I don't find that Zopa have done enough to keep Miss C updated about what was happening or communicated with her in a fair way. On one occasion Zopa sent an update to the third-party. Miss C had to contact Zopa on a number of occasions on the phone to try and rectify the matter. She was also promised multiple call backs that didn't happen. Having listened to the calls Zopa provided this service, it's clear Miss C is very upset by what's happened. The poor communication has caused Miss C additional distress and inconvenience.

Taking into account all of the above, I'm satisfied that Zopa needs to do more to put things right for Miss C and increase the compensation award.

### **Putting things right**

For the reasons outlined in my findings, Zopa should pay Miss C £300 to recognise the impact this situation has had on her.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons set out above, I uphold Miss C's complaint. I order Zopa Bank Limited to put

things right for Miss C by doing what I've said above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss C to accept or reject my decision before 4 April 2024.

Sophie Wilkinson  
**Ombudsman**