

The complaint

Mr B complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Barclaycard didn't provide the service it should have when he contacted it about a refund of a payment to his Barclaycard.

What happened

On 29 September 2023, Mr B made payments in branch towards his two credit cards. He says the staff member made a mistake and both payments were made to the same card. Mr B was then contacted about a payment still being due on one card. He contacted Barclaycard and following this he was told his payment would be refunded but this didn't happen for months, and he needed to make several calls to chase this. Mr B said that on the calls the staff members talked about his medical condition. Mr B said that he didn't know how Barclaycard knew about this. He also said that staff members hung up on him and didn't return his calls.

Barclaycard issued a final response letter dated 6 December 2023. It upheld Mr B's complaint about the lack of action following his request for a payment to be refunded and about recording a medical issue when permission hadn't been given. It paid him £250 to apologise for the inconvenience caused. It said that the refund would be processed and the note on the account regarding Mr B's medical issue would be removed.

Mr B wasn't satisfied with the response provided by Barclaycard. He reiterated how many staff members he needed to speak to and the poor service he received and the delay in getting his money refunded. He was particularly concerned about how Barclaycard was aware of his health details.

Our investigator asked Barclaycard about how it had become aware of Mr B's medical condition, and it said Mr B had made it aware when he raised a previous complaint. She noted Barclaycard's reassurance that the information hadn't been shared externally and that this had been removed from Mr B's notes. She also noted the delay in Mr B's refund being processed. Given these issues she thought the action taken regarding the information Barclaycard held and the £250 compensation paid was reasonable.

However, our investigator noted that since 6 December 2023, a further error had been made as the refunded payment wasn't deducted from Mr B's credit card until 3 January 2024. She said because of this further compensation should be paid and recommended a further £50. She said that the option should be given to Mr B as to whether the £50 is transferred to his bank account or applied to his credit card. She also said that Barclaycard should ensure that Mr B hadn't incurred any additional interest due to the mistakes that had been made.

Mr B didn't think that a total of £300 compensation was enough given the poor service he had received. He also didn't accept that he had told Barclaycard about his medical condition.

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.

I am sorry to hear of the upset Mr B has been caused and the service he has received. Barclaycard has acknowledged that there were issues and provided compensation, so I have considered whether this action is reasonable given the issues that Mr B experienced or whether Barclaycard needs to do more to resolve this complaint.

The initial problem arose because Mr B made payments towards his two accounts, but these were applied to the same account. Mr B contacted Barclaycard about this and requested that the duplicated payment be refunded. Mr B was told this would happen but there were delays due to systems issues with Barclaycard and the refunded payment wasn't processed until 7 December 2023 (almost a month after it had been requested). I can understand how this delay will have caused Mr B distress. Mr B was also caused inconvenience as he had to chase Barclaycard to understand what was happening with his refund. I can see he made several calls through November 2023 about this issue and that one call was disconnected. This isn't the service that Mr B should have received.

Mr B was also upset that when he contacted Barclaycard, he became aware that it had recorded medical information about him. He didn't know where Barclaycard had obtained this information. I can understand that this would have been upsetting for Mr B. Our investigator asked Barclaycard about this, and it said that a marker was added to Mr B's profile when he had made it aware of his medical condition when he raised a separate complaint in 2021. I note Mr B's comments about this, but I find it more likely than not that this information was obtained from discussions with Mr B. That said, I cannot say that Mr B agreed to have this information recorded on his profile and I can appreciate why this has caused him upset.

Barclaycard has confirmed that the information about Mr B's medical condition has been removed and that this information wasn't shared externally.

As the medical information has been removed from Mr B's profile and he has now received the refund of the duplicate payment, I find he has been put back in the position he would have been had the delays with the refund and issue with the recording of information not occurred. However, these issues, and the service he received while trying to address them, caused Mr B stress and inconvenience and I think it reasonable that he is compensated for this.

Barclaycard paid Mr B £250 for the distress and inconvenience he was caused by these issues. However, during the investigation of this complaint, it has been identified that although the refund of £250 was returned to Mr B on 7 December 2023 this wasn't manually debited from his Barclaycard until 3 January 2024. This could have caused further confusion and given the circumstances of this complaint I agree with our investigator's recommendation that Mr B should be paid a further £50 compensation because of this. Our investigator also noted that Mr B shouldn't incur any additional interest as a result of the errors. While I note the issues relate to amounts not being refunded from the credit card and so additional interest shouldn't be an issue, I find it fair that this is checked.

I understand that Mr B doesn't think that the compensation paid and recommended is enough given the upset he has been caused. But, taking into account the number of calls Mr B made, the extent of the delay, and the upset caused by the service Mr B received, and noting the actions Barclaycard took in response to these issues, I find this compensation (along with the other actions taken) reasonable.

Putting things right

Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Barclaycard should:

- pay Mr B a further £50 compensation (additional to the £250 compensation that has paid) for the inconvenience caused by the delay in deducting the refund amount from his credit card. Mr B should be given the option to have this amount applied to his credit card or paid to his bank account.
- ensure that Mr B hasn't been charged additional interest on the outstanding balance on his credit card as a result of the errors.

My final decision

My final decision is that Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Barclaycard should take the actions set out above in resolution of this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 19 June 2024.

Jane Archer
Ombudsman