

The complaint

Mr S complains that Clydesdale Financial Services Limited trading as Barclays Partner Finance (“BPF”) are showing his monthly instalment limit incorrectly on his statements.

What happened

In December 2021 Mr S took out a credit agreement with BPF to fund purchases from Amazon.

The monthly instalment limit (MIL) determined how much Mr S could borrow from BPF under the agreement. Mr S’s original limit was reduced to zero because BPF decided by reference to its responsible lending criteria that it couldn’t offer Mr S any more credit.

Mr S made a complaint to BPF about the MIL being reduced. This complaint was dealt with by this service under a separate reference.

Mr S noticed in November 2023 that his statements were still showing a MIL of £70. This led him to believe that his Mil had been adjusted back up to £70. Then he found that he wasn’t able to use the agreement to purchase items. He complained to BPF.

In its final response, BPF acknowledged that although Mr S’s MIL had been adjusted to zero, a system error meant that this was not updating on the system which sent the statements out to Mr S. BPF said that due to the error, it was upholding the complaint. It credited Mr S’s bank account with £50 for the distress and inconvenience caused. BPF said the issue had now been fixed and all of its systems were now reflecting the MIL of zero.

Mr S remained unhappy and brought his complaint to this service.

Our investigator didn’t uphold the complaint. She said that BPF’s payment of £50 in respect of the administrative error was fair and reasonable.

Mr S didn’t agree. He said it had taken BPF over a year to fix the system issue. He said the credit limit was still there, but he wasn’t being allowed access to it. He said he didn’t have a problem with affordability because his wages had doubled since he entered into the agreement. Mr S didn’t think the compensation was adequate.

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.

BPF has acknowledged that due to a system issue, the reduction in his MIL didn’t update on the system that sent out his statements to him. BPF has resolved the system issue now, and has paid compensation to Mr S.

I appreciate that Mr S has had to complain about the statement showing incorrect information more than once. He’s made the point that it took BPF a long time to resolve the issue. I can see that in its letter dated 26 March 2024 BPF acknowledged that the error was

an ongoing one which it was still investigating. And I agree that the system issue had been ongoing since November 2023. However, notwithstanding that it took several months for the system issue to be resolved, I don't think this has impacted significantly on Mr S. because he was already aware that his MIL had been adjusted to zero.

I understand that Mr S is frustrated that his MIL was adjusted to nil. He's made some points about affordability and an improvement in his financial circumstances. I'm not in a position to either agree or disagree with Mr S about that. However, the adjustment of the MIL to zero was the subject of a separate complaint by Mr S and I'm unable to look into that again here. I can only consider the complaint about the incorrect information being shown on Mr S's statement in this decision.

BPF has provided statements to this service to show that the issue has now been resolved. So I've thought about whether the compensation already paid is sufficient to reflect any distress and inconvenience caused to Mr S for the period of time when the system issue meant that his statements were showing the incorrect information. I've taken into account that throughout this period, Mr S was aware that his MIL was zero.

On balance, I think the compensation already paid is fair and reasonable, and in line with what this service would award. I won't be asking BPF to do anything further.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold the complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 10 September 2024.

Emma Davy
Ombudsman