

The complaint

Mr S says Nationwide Building Society (“Nationwide”) has unfairly charged him interest on his credit card balances, and often gave him incorrect information about the balance due on his account.

What happened

Mr S has provided a lot of information in support of his complaint. As a result, I understand some of his points will be dealt with under a different complaint, so I will set out the facts of this complaint below.

Mr S says he has been unfairly charged interest and fees by Nationwide several times between February 2022 and August 2023. Mr S says he pays his balance off in full every month so he shouldn’t have been charged these amounts. He also says Nationwide has admitted that it gave him the wrong information on a call, and it offered him £75 in compensation. But Mr S says he should receive £700 in compensation for this, and further compensation for the distress and inconvenience caused.

Mr S says he has been paying his minimum payments as he wants the transactions in dispute removed and his balance adjusted accordingly. He is not happy he is continually being charged interest on these amounts. Nationwide made the decision to close Mr S’s account, but he wants it reinstated.

Nationwide says it has charged interest fairly and in line with the terms and conditions of the account. It says Mr S needs to clear his outstanding balance in full to avoid interest, not just the minimum payment amount. It agrees Mr S was given some incorrect information on the phone, but the offer of £75 is fair in the circumstances. It also says it closed Mr S’s account in-line with its terms and conditions, and it will not reinstate it.

Our investigator considered this complaint and decided not to uphold it. Mr S was unhappy with this outcome, so the complaint has been passed to me for a final decision.

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.

As I’ve said above, Mr S has disputed many interest and late payment charges incurred on his credit card account. I’ve considered the evidence supplied and I’ve been through all of Mr S’s credit card statements to come to a decision on whether I think the charges applied are fair. As there are so many, I have used the spreadsheet Mr S sent us to create the table below setting out the disputed payments and my findings in relation to each:

Date charge applied	Amount	Charged applied by	My findings

19/02/2022	£5.59	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
19/04/2022	£7.01	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
19/05/2022	£0.70	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
20/06/2022	£8.27	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
20/06/2022	£8.27	Nationwide	Appears to be a duplicate entry on Mr S's spreadsheet. I have only seen evidence of one charge for this amount on this date.
20/06/2022	£8.27	Nationwide	Appears to be a duplicate entry on Mr S's spreadsheet. I have only seen evidence of one charge for this amount on this date.
19/11/2022	£5.09	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
13/01/2023	£12	Nationwide	This charge relates to a late payment fee for not paying minimum amount on time, evidence shows this was applied correctly.
13/02/2023	£12	Nationwide	This charge relates to a late payment fee for not paying minimum amount on time, evidence shows this was applied correctly.
14/04/2023	£12	Nationwide	This charge relates to a late payment fee for not paying minimum amount on time, evidence shows this was applied correctly.
19/04/2023	£8.45	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
19/04/2023	£8.45	Nationwide	Appears to be a duplicate entry on Mr S's spreadsheet. I have only seen evidence of one charge for this amount on this date.
13/05/2023	£13.75	Nationwide	This is no evidence of this charge on Mr S's account for this date and amount.
19/05/2023	£13.75	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
13/06/2023	£13.79	Nationwide	This is no evidence of this charge on Mr S's account for this date and amount.
13/06/2023	£12	Nationwide	This charge relates to a late payment fee for not paying minimum amount on time, evidence shows this was applied correctly.
13/06/2023	£12	Nationwide	Appears to be a duplicate entry on Mr S's spreadsheet. I have only seen evidence of one charge for this amount on this date.
13/07/2023	£14.18	Nationwide	There is no transaction for this amount on this date. There is a transaction for this amount on 09/07/2023 so I assume Mr S entered the date incorrectly here. But evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit

			balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
13/07/2023	£14.18	Nationwide	Appears to be a duplicate entry on Mr S's spreadsheet. I have only seen evidence of one charge for this amount.
14/07/2023	£12	Nationwide	This charge relates to a late payment fee for not paying minimum amount on time, evidence shows this was applied correctly.
14/07/2023	£12	Nationwide	Appears to be a duplicate entry on Mr S's spreadsheet. I have only seen evidence of one charge for this amount on this date.
13/08/2023	£10.12	Nationwide	Evidence shows this is an interest payment on the outstanding credit balance, applied correctly as per terms and conditions of the account.
21/08/2023	£3	Nationwide	This is no evidence of this charge on Mr S's account for this date and amount.

As outlined in the table, I am satisfied that all the charges applied by Nationwide have been applied correctly and in-line with the terms and conditions of the account. The statements from this period show that Mr S had been making monthly payments to his credit card account, but often not paying off the balance off in full. As a result, he was being charged interest on the purchases made that weren't paid off, and on occasion was also charged late payment fees. But I am not persuaded these were unauthorised transactions, or that they were applied unfairly. So, I don't think Nationwide need to refund any of these.

I understand Mr S feels he had always been given the incorrect information about his outstanding balances and he says this is what led to the interest charges and fee. Which he says isn't fair. I have seen evidence that Nationwide agree to compensate him £75 for the incorrect outstanding balance quoted on the phone. Mr S says he was told the outstanding balance was a £1050, but in fact it was £850. So, he says Nationwide should pay him the difference of £700.

I've considered this carefully, but I don't think that would be fair. I say this because Mr S spent the full £850 on his credit card, and he had the benefit of the goods or services he purchased. I accept the incorrect information provided by Nationwide would've caused inconvenience, but the amount offered more than covers the interest he would've been charged on the outstanding £700 and compensates him for this inconvenience. So, I don't think Nationwide needs to offer anything further.

I've not seen any other evidence that Mr S was given incorrect balances on the phone. In any event, Mr S was sent a regular monthly statement of his outstanding balance which clearly showed how much to pay and when this was due. Mr S could've also retrieved this information online. So, I think Mr S would've been aware of his correct outstanding balance and when this was due.

Mr S is unhappy Nationwide has closed his account and he says he wants it reinstated. But Nationwide are within their rights to cancel a credit facility, and as this is a business decision to lend, I am not in a position to ask them to reverse it. So, I won't be able to ask Nationwide to reopen his credit card account.

My final decision

For the reasons outlined above, I am not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 1 April 2025.

Sienna Mahboobani
Ombudsman