

The complaint

Ms C is unhappy that Wise Payments Limited, trading as Wise, caused a transfer she wanted to make to fail, and with the service she received from Wise surrounding this.

What happened

Ms C attempted to make a large transfer to Wise using the transfer details she had been provided by Wise. However, Ms C's sending bank returned the money to her account shortly after attempting the transfer on the basis that the destination account details were incorrect.

Ms C wasn't happy about this, especially as her sending bank deducted a fee for the failed transfer. And she also wasn't happy that when she contacted Wise to try to resolve the issue she wasn't provided with correct details in a timely manner. So, she raised a complaint.

Wise responded to Ms C and accepted that they had provided her with incorrect transfer details that caused the transfer to fail. Wise also accepted that they had provided poor service to Ms C when she'd contacted them about this issue, including not returning phone calls to Ms C when they should have. Wise apologised to Ms C for what had happened and offered to pay £100 to her as compensation for any trouble or upset she may have incurred. Ms C wasn't satisfied with Wise's response, so she referred her complaint to this service.

One of our investigators looked at this complaint and liaised with both Ms C and Wise. At this time, Wise reassessed their position on the complaint and confirmed that Ms C hadn't been given incorrect transfer details by Wise, despite what their complaint response letter had said. However, Wise did feel that this mistake added to the poor service that Ms C had received, and in consideration of Ms C's entire experience when contacting Wise, they offered to pay an increased amount of £275 compensation to Ms C.

Our investigator felt that Wise's revised offer did provide a fair and reasonable resolution to this complaint. However, Ms C disagreed, and felt that Wise should fairly be held accountable for losses she'd incurred because of the transfer not completing. So, the matter was escalated to an ombudsman 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.

Having done so, I'm satisfied that it wasn't the case that Wise provided incorrect transfer information to Ms F, even though Ms F was initially told this by Wise. Instead, I'm satisfied that Wise provided the correct transfer information to Ms F in the first instance. And I note that Ms F has made successful transfers to Wise using the same information that she was given by Wise on previous occasions.

Ms F has provided information to this service which demonstrates that she inputted her transfer instruction with her sending bank correctly and in accordance with the information given to her by Wise. And Mrs F has also showed that her sending bank returned that

instructed transfer to her sending account with an explanation that the transfer details as inputted were incorrect.

Unfortunately, it isn't within my remit here to investigate the actions of Ms F's sending bank. Rather, my remit is based on considering the actions of Wise, given that this is a complaint raised against Wise by Ms C.

What this means is that in this instance I'm satisfied that Wise provided the correct transfer details to Ms F such that I don't consider them to be responsible or accountable for that transfer not completing. And it also means that I'm unable to question or consider why the transfer may have failed resultant to the actions undertaken by Ms C's sending bank, because the sending bank aren't a party to this complaint.

I appreciate that this may be frustrating for Ms C. But if Ms C would like this service to consider a complaint against the sending bank regarding the transfer in question, she would need to raise a complaint with the sending bank in the first instance. And, after the sending bank have had the opportunity to consider and formally respond to that complaint, it may be the case that Ms C would have the right to refer that complaint to this service, if she still wanted to do so.

However, while I don't feel that Wise should be considered responsible or accountable for the transfer in question not completing, I do feel that Wise provided poor service to Ms C when she first contacted them about it, including that Wise didn't call Ms C back when they should have done.

However, I do note that after Ms C first spoke with Wise, they did send her an email which confirmed how Ms C could obtain the correct transfer details from Wise's online platform. And while I can appreciate how Ms C might have sought to confirm those details with Wise, given that they were the same details she had been given previously (because they were the correct details) I feel that the consistency of the information Wise were presenting to her reasonably should have caused her to consider that the details might be correct and to either reattempt the transfer or to try a test transfer for a smaller amount, potentially after speaking with her sending bank.

What's also clear, and is also accepted by Wise, is that Wise didn't investigate or respond to Ms C's complaint to a reasonable standard. However, it must be noted that the remit of this service doesn't extend to considering complaints about how a complaint had been handled, even when the focus of that complaint is a financial matter that does fall within the remit of this service, as is the case here.

In consideration of all the above, I don't feel that Wise should be held accountable or responsible for any losses that Ms C may have incurred here because she wasn't able to make the transfer when she first wanted to – because I'm satisfied that it wasn't through any fault of Wise's that Ms C wasn't able to make the transfer when she first wanted to.

Furthermore, while I do feel that Wise provided a poor standard of service to Ms C when she contacted them, I feel that the revised offer of £275 compensation made by Wise does represent a fair resolution to the service aspect of Ms C's complaint. This is in consideration of the fact that confirmation of the (correct) transfer information was available to Ms C via Wise's online platform, and in consideration that this compensation is only for the service issues Ms C experienced and not in consideration of any financial loss that Ms C claims.

All of which means that while I will be upholding this complaint in Ms C's favour, I'll be doing so only to instruct Wise to pay the £275 compensation to Ms C that they've already offered to pay. And I won't be issuing any further instructions to Wise beyond this.

I realise this won't be the outcome Ms C was wanting. But I hope that she understands, given what I've explained, why I've made the final decision that I have.

Putting things right

Wise must pay £275 to Ms C.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint against Wise Payments Limited, trading as Wise, on the basis explained above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms C to accept or reject my decision before 24 October 2024.

Paul Cooper
Ombudsman