

The complaint

Mr M complains that Bank of Scotland plc trading as Halifax wrongly debited a payment from his regular saver account and won't correct this.

What happened

Mr M explains that he was saving £250 a month to his regular saver account. His payment in February 2024 was intended for the new annual term of the account. But he says that it was wrongly included in the maturity of the previous term.

Halifax said that this payment of £250 was made by standing order due on the fourth of the month. And as the fourth wasn't a working day in February 2024 it was credited to the account on the fifth. That was also the day that the existing annual term of the account matured. And Halifax said it hadn't made a mistake in including this in the balance transferred on maturity to Mr M's nominated account. There were account restrictions that meant that this couldn't be reversed. But it had added the potential lost interest of £13.83 on the payment to the account as a gesture of goodwill.

Our investigator didn't recommend that the complaint be upheld. He said that Halifax hadn't made an error. But Halifax had added the interest Mr M could have earned on the payment of £250 had it remained in the account. And so, Mr M hadn't lost out.

Mr M didn't agree and wanted his complaint to be reviewed by an ombudsman. He said he had been treated very badly. And the issue was why Halifax can take money out of the account in error and not have the facility to put this back. He wanted Halifax to explain why it hadn't done so.

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 can see from his statement that Mr M had made monthly payments of £250 to the account in the period up to February 2024. And that the account term was to mature after one year on 5 February 2024 and with all of the balance including interest to be paid to his nominated savings account. Mr M clearly intended that the payment he made in February 2024 count towards the new term. But even with that payment here arriving on the working day after it was due this was still on the maturity date of the prior term. And so, it was automatically included in the maturity amount. The payment would need to have arrived on 6 February 2024 at the earliest to be included in the new term.

So, I'm afraid I don't find Halifax has made a mistake. And that being the case I don't have a basis to require it to transfer the payment of £250 back to the regular saver account. But Halifax has compensated Mr M for the interest he could have earned on this payment over the next term – which is £13.83. And Mr M also has the £250 available to him. So, I don't consider he's been disadvantaged. I can see from its case notes that Halifax has also said it can arrange for the date of the standing order to be changed if Mr M wants.

I know Mr M will be disappointed when I say for these reasons I won't be asking Halifax to do anything further.

My final decision

My decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 20 December 2024.

Michael Crewe
Ombudsman