

The complaint

Mrs M complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Tesco Bank charged her interest when her 0% interest rate ended.

What happened

On 26 June 2023 Mrs M completed a money transfer of £3,300.00 to her Tesco credit card with a promotional interest rate of 0% for 12 months. A money transfer fee of £131.67 was applied.

On 5 May 2024 Tesco included a notification on the front page of Mrs M's monthly statement which confirmed that the 0% money transfer rate would expire at the end of her July 2024 statement.

On 14 June 2024 Tesco sent a letter to Mrs M advising her that the 0% rate was coming to an end on 5 July 2024. A final reminder was included on the front page of Mrs M's monthly statement for August 2024.

Mrs M was charged interest on the balance from 5 July 2024.

Mrs M complained to Tesco. She said she'd noted in her diary that the balance had to be cleared by November 2024 and thought the promotional rate of interest was for 18 months. Mrs M said she hadn't received any correspondence advising her that the 0% rate was ending and asked for the interest to be refunded.

Tesco didn't uphold the complaint. In its final response it said the duration of the offer was for 12 months and the interest charged on the August, September, October and November statements was correct.

Mrs M remained unhappy and brought her complaint to this service. She said she'd been out of the country due to a family bereavement and hadn't received any letters or had the opportunity to check her statements.

Our investigator didn't uphold the complaint. He said that Tesco had sent information to demonstrate that the offer was for 12 months and had taken reasonable steps to inform Mrs M that the offer was expiring.

Mrs M didn't agree. She said she wasn't receiving paper statements and hadn't received any letters or emails advising her that the offer was ending. She said she didn't check her statements every month as she only used the card for the balance transfer and had diarised the balance transfer end date as November 2024.

Because Mrs M didn't agree I've been asked to review the complaint.

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 know it will disappoint Mrs M, but I agree with the investigators opinion. I'll explain why.

I've read and considered the whole file, but I'll concentrate my comments to those points which are most relevant to my decision. If I don't comment on a specific point, it's not because I've failed to take it on board and think about it, but because I don't think I need to comment on it in order to reach what I think is the right outcome.

I've reviewed the information provided by Tesco about the promotional offer. Based on what I've seen, I'm satisfied that the offer was for 12 months. I appreciate that Mrs M has said that she thought the offer was for 18 months and made a note in her diary on that basis, but I haven't seen any evidence to support this.

I've also reviewed the statements and the letter that Tesco sent to Mrs M. Tesco made Mrs M aware on several occasions that the promotional rate was ending in July 2024 by including notifications on her monthly statement and sending a letter. I appreciate that Mrs M has said that she didn't check her statements every month, but this isn't something that I can hold Tesco responsible for, as it's a customer's obligation to manage the account which includes checking statements. Mrs M has also said that she didn't receive any letters advising her that the promotional rate was ending. I can see that Tesco wrote to Mrs M on 14 June 2024. The letter was correctly addressed to Mrs M at the address held on file for her. So I can't say that Tesco made an error here.

Based on what I've seen, the promotional rate was for 12 months and the interest has been correctly applied.

I understand that Mrs M experienced some circumstances which meant that she wasn't checking her statements and that she spent some time out of the country. I understand that Mrs M was going through a stressful time but I'm unable to uphold the complaint.

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 Mrs M to accept or reject my decision before 28 March 2025.

Emma Davy
Ombudsman