

The complaint

Mr E complains about issues in relation to closing his account with Al Ryan Bank PLC (Al Ryan) . He would like compensation for the distress and inconvenience

What happened

The details of this complaint are well known to both parties so I won't repeat them again here instead I will focus on giving the reasons for my 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 have reached the following conclusions:-

- Al Ryan has accepted there was a delay in responding to Mr E's secure message giving notice on his account. Whilst I appreciate the frustration, it did then back date the request to the date of the secure message which I think was appropriate.
- I appreciate Mr E didn't get his funds on the appointed date , he got them the next day. Al Ryan's terms state that it may delay payment for procedural checks. From what I have seen the payment was made 24 hours late as Al Ryan attempted to call Mr E on the date funds were due to be released . Unfortunately, when Mr E returned the call it was past Al Ryan's cut off time to send or make payments . The delay is unfortunate, but Al Ryan's process with large transactions is to contact customers to confirm payee details prior to issuing funds. As this is a security measure I don't think this was unreasonable and I am not aware Mr E suffered any loss as a result.
- In terms of Al Ryan not closing Mr E's account it seems from the records of phone calls Mr E asked to withdraw money not close his account. There are different processes for withdrawal and closure. However, Al Ryan accepts that, in his secure message, Mr E stated he wanted to close his account so it should have explained the process to do so.
- In terms of Al Ryan not transferring the full balance of the account we have checked this with Al Ryan. As I understand it an account needs to be closed to receive the funds and any accrued profit. This has to be done by a written request not by the secure message. The delay in transferring the accrued interest was due to Mr E sending a secure message. Al Ryan then needed approval to make an exception to transfer the full balance without the usual written request. The delay was unfortunate, but Al Ryan did make an exception to its usual process and offered compensation to cover distress and inconvenience which I think was appropriate.
- In terms of Al Ryan not providing a full response to the aspects of Mr E's complaint that it didn't uphold Al Ryan has explained that it discussed its findings in depth in a resolution call, so it felt a brief final response letter was appropriate. I don't think that was unreasonable. I hope the further detail I have supplied here, to the main points

Mr E raised, is helpful.

- Finally, I know Mr E was frustrated that he had to wait over an hour to speak to Al Ryan by phone. That's unfortunate but call response times can be influenced by any number of factors such as staffing , call volumes and complexity of calls received. It's not possible for businesses to always predict such things.
- I have noted that Al Ryan apologised to Mr E for any distress and inconvenience caused for which it offered £50 compensation. It also offered , on proof of costs, to refund ID certification costs Mr E incurred to close his account. Considering all the information have I think this is a reasonable resolution as I do think Al Ryan could have been clearer in its communications with Mr E.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint

In full and final settlement Al Ryan Bank PLC should :-

- If it has not already done so, pay Mr E the £50 compensation for distress and inconvenience it has already offered
- On proof of the costs involved, refund the costs Mr E incurred in providing ID certification

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr E to accept or reject my decision before 20 October 2022.

Bridget Makins
Ombudsman