

## **The complaint**

Ms C complains Monzo Bank Ltd (Monzo) won't refund her for a payment she didn't make.

## **What happened**

Ms C noticed a transaction on her statement she didn't recognise. The transaction was to a retail store on 9 March 2022 for less than £30. Miss C contacted Monzo and queried the payment.

Monzo investigated the transaction and said it had been carried out the day before, but was showing on the statement as the next day. Monzo also said the payment had been made with Ms C's genuine card and personal identification number (PIN).

Ms C complained to Monzo and told it she couldn't have carried out the transaction as she was working that day. Ms C also said she hadn't lost her card or told anyone else her PIN.

Monzo responded to the complaint and still didn't agree to refund the payment. Monzo explained the delayed payment and said because the genuine card and PIN had been used it couldn't see how someone else had carried out the transaction.

Monzo also sent Ms C the details of the transaction, which store and what time the genuine payment was made as opposed to when it debited Ms C's account.

Unhappy with this response, Ms C brought her complaint to this service. An investigator looked into things and didn't think Ms C's complaint should be upheld. The investigator couldn't see how someone else had been able to make the transaction.

The investigator thought it was fair Monzo had held Ms C liable for the transaction.

Ms C didn't agree and said she knows she didn't carry out the transaction. Ms C also said she'd used the store a month earlier and contactless wasn't working. Ms C used chip and PIN then and thought there could be an error by the store.

Ms C also felt her complaint was dismissed because of the low amount, and thought this was unfair as it was her money she'd lost. Ms C also wanted to know the date and time of the actual payment, to check this was within store opening hours.

Ms C asked for an ombudsman to decide things.

## **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 a general rule it's fair for Monzo to hold Ms C liable for a transaction if the evidence suggests she authorised it.

I've looked at the technical evidence Monzo has provided and I'm satisfied the transaction in dispute was carried out using Ms C's genuine card and PIN. I'm also satisfied it was carried out on 8 March 2022, but not processed until 9 March 2022.

The transaction was carried out on a weekday and within the store's opening hours. Monzo gave Ms C the details of the transaction in its final response.

Ms C says she still had the card and didn't share her PIN with anyone else. Like the investigator, I can't see how someone else could have carried out this transaction.

The transaction is for less than £30, but Ms C had significantly more than this in her account at the time. It seems unlikely a random third party would obtain Ms C's card and PIN, carry out a small transaction, then return the card to her.

On balance, I think the most likely explanation is Ms C authorised this payment.

I've considered what Ms C has said about her not visiting that particular store often and being at work at the time. But I can't see any other explanation than she authorised the payment or allowed someone else to. In either event, it's fair for Monzo to hold Ms C liable.

Ms C says the store could have made a mistake following her earlier visit. Whilst possible, I don't think this is likely as Ms C's genuine card was used. Had the payment been keyed in by the retailer, Monzo's technical evidence would show this.

Ms C says the fact the payment was for a low amount means Monzo didn't investigate properly. I don't think this is the case, Monzo has provided evidence to show how the payment was made, and this evidence would be the same for any amount of payment.

If the payment had been for a larger amount, and Monzo provided the same evidence, I'd still come to the same conclusions. I don't believe the amount of the transaction is relevant to the outcome of Ms C's complaint or Monzo's investigation into it.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is I don't uphold Ms C's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms C to accept or reject my decision before 21 October 2022.

Chris Russ

**Ombudsman**