

The complaint

Mr S complains that Tesco Personal Finance PLC trading as Tesco Bank sent a security code to his ex-wife not him.

What happened

Mr S says Tesco Bank sent a new security code to his ex-wife's mobile telephone that ought to have been sent to him. He says he was concerned that his ex-wife could access his account, view his spending or use his account. Mr S says Tesco Bank offered him £25 compensation, but he doesn't think that is sufficient as he was the victim of financial abuse by his ex-wife.

Tesco Bank accepts it made a mistake but says there is no evidence Mr S's account was accessed by his ex-wife. It says it paid Mr S £25 compensation which he accepted, and he didn't tell it about any financial abuse.

Mr S brought his complaint to us and our investigator upheld the complaint. The investigator thought Tesco Bank should pay a further £100 compensation for the distress and inconvenience Mr S was caused.

Mr S hasn't replied to the investigator's view and Tesco Bank doesn't accept it. Tesco Bank says the problem was sorted out in a matter of four days and there was no lasting impact.

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 come to the same overall view as the investigator, that Tesco Bank should increase its compensation offer.

There is no dispute here that Tesco Bank made a mistake by sending confidential information to the wrong person. I have no doubt Mr S was concerned that his account could have been compromised and that his personal spending made visible to his ex-wife. I accept that Mr S's account wasn't compromised but am satisfied he was caused distress as a result of the mistake.

I also accept that Mr S was caused inconvenience in having to speak to Tesco Bank again some days later about the security code.

The only question for me to decide is the compensation level. I have made clear that I think Mr S was caused distress and inconvenience whilst in the process of a separation. I appreciate Tesco Bank wouldn't have been aware of the background and circumstances, but it still made a significant mistake. And I don't think £25 compensation reflects the level of this mistake and the inconvenience caused.

Overall, I think that Tesco Bank should pay a total of £125 compensation which I think is fair and reasonable. I don't think this was a simple administration error but a mistake that caused

Mr S concern about the security of his account regardless of if it was compromised. As I don't think Mr S's account was accessed in any way and the problem was resolved within days then I don't think the compensation should be increased beyond the £125.

Putting things right

Tesco Bank should pay a further £100 compensation.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint and order Tesco Personal Finance PLC trading as Tesco Bank to pay Mr S a further £100 compensation.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 7 February 2023.

David Singh
Ombudsman