

## **The complaint**

Mr M complains about the level of service he received when he applied for a credit card with HSBC UK Bank Plc.

## **What happened**

In December 2022 Mr M applied for a credit card with HSBC. Due to some issues uploading his information to the system Mr M cancelled the application.

Mr M submitted a second application but when he called HSBC about it they had no record of it. He says he was advised to wait one month and re-apply. Mr M reapplied in January 2023 but was told that he should've waited until 3 months had elapsed.

Mr M was unhappy about the service he'd received. He said the incorrect advice given by HSBC caused him to submit a further application which in turn resulted in further credit searches being carried out. He wanted the credit searches removed from his credit record.

HSBC acknowledged that Mr M had experienced some difficulties contacting them about his initial application and offered £50 compensation. It also agreed to remove the credit search dated 8 January 2023.

Mr M remained unhappy and complained to this service.

I issued a provisional decision in which I upheld the complaint. I reviewed the system notes and records provided by HSBC. These showed that Mr M had started applications on 16 December 2022 and 21 January 2023. There was no evidence to show that Mr M had started an application on 8 January 2023 but HSBC had carried out a credit search on this date. I said that this credit search should be removed as it couldn't be shown by HSBC that it related to an application made by Mr M. I said, however, that I was satisfied that the credit search relating to Mr M's first application on 16 December 2022 had been carried out correctly. I also listened to the telephone calls between Mr M and HSBC to determine whether incorrect advice had been given about Mr M's ability to reapply and within what timescale. I concluded that HSBC had likely advised Mr M in a telephone call on 21 January 2023 that he could submit a third application, and that this advice was incorrect and had resulted in a further credit search being carried out.

I decided that HSBC should remove the credit searches carried out on 8 January 2023 and 21 January 2023 and pay further compensation of £150 to Mr M.

I invited both parties to let me have any further evidence or arguments they wished to raise. Both parties responded and said that they accepted my provisional 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.

Both parties have accepted my provisional decision. No further evidence has been adduced.

I see no reason to reach a different conclusion to that which I reached in my provisional decision.

### **Putting things right**

HSBC UK Bank Plc must remove the hard credit searches dated 8 January 2023 and 21 January 2023 and pay further compensation of £150 to Mr M.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I uphold the complaint. HSBC UK Bank Plc must take the steps I've set out above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 12 October 2023.

Emma Davy  
**Ombudsman**