

The complaint

Mr M complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Barclaycard has recorded incorrect information on his credit file.

What happened

Mr M had a credit card account with Barclays Bank PLC trading as Barclaycard ("Barclaycard"). Barclaycard defaulted the account in August 2018 after Mr M entered into a debt management plan with a third party.

In October 2021, Mr M complained to Barclaycard saying they had incorrectly recorded missed payments on his credit file for May and June 2018. Barclaycard acknowledged the complaint but didn't issue their final response letter on the merits of it.

Mr M referred the complaint to us. Our investigator upheld it. He said Barclaycard had reported incorrect information to Mr M's credit file and recommended that they corrected this. Our investigator also recommended that Barclaycard pay Mr M £100 for not responding to his complaint, despite saying they would investigate it.

Barclaycard agreed to pay Mr M £100 but said they hadn't been reporting the missed payments to his credit file and hadn't reported anything until September 2018. Barclaycard asked us to provide evidence of the missed payments, which our investigator then sent. However, it then took Barclaycard several months to reply. When they did, Barclaycard said they'd been in touch with one of the credit reference agencies who'd told them missed payments had only been recorded on Mr M's credit file for September and October 2018.

Mr M has since sent in evidence which he says shows that missed payments are still being recorded for May and June 2018. He's also pointed out that missed payments should not be showing for September and October 2018 because his account was defaulted by Barclaycard in August 2018.

As the complaint remains unresolved, it's been passed to me for a decision.

I issued my provisional decision on this complaint on 25 August 2023, in which I said the following and which now forms part of my final decision:

'I've seen evidence from Mr M in the form of a screenshot from his credit report that his credit file is currently showing missed payments for May and June 2018. I've also seen from the account statements that Barclaycard sent to us that Mr M made the minimum payments towards his credit card in those months. So, no missed payments should be shown. Our investigator has sent the screenshot showing this information to Barclaycard however we have not had their comments. I note that they've previously said that they've been told by one of the credit reference agencies that they've only been recording missed payments for September and October 2018. But Mr M has presented compelling evidence that missed payments are still being recorded for May and June 2018.'

The difficulty here is that I can't be reasonably sure where the fault lies. It could be for example that the credit reference agencies have misinterpreted the data Barclaycard has sent them. And I note Barclaycard seem adamant that they haven't recorded missed payments for May and June 2018. It could also be true that Barclaycard have, and have continued to make, the error. I note also that Barclaycard sold the debt some time ago to a third party, so it's even possible that the third party is the one who has made the error.

I think the fairest way to resolve this is for Barclaycard to contact both of the credit reference agencies that are reporting Mr M's data for this account, and clearly set out that no missed payments should be recorded for May and June 2018. I also am not persuaded that missed payments should be recorded for September and October 2018. As Mr M says, Barclaycard defaulted the account in August 2018, so there is no need for missed payments to be reported after then as the account had in fact been terminated (otherwise why would a default be recorded?). So, I think Barclaycard needs to make that clear to the credit reference agencies as well.

If, having done that, incorrect information remains, then Mr M may wish to take this further with the credit reference agencies.

I've also considered how long this dispute has remained unresolved. And that is I'm afraid in no small part to Barclaycard failing to engage with Mr M and with us on numerous occasions over several months. I think this has caused Mr M further inconvenience. I am currently inclined to say that Barclaycard should pay Mr M £250 in recognition of this, which includes the £100 they originally agreed to pay.

My provisional decision

I uphold this complaint and direct Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Barclaycard to contact the credit reference agencies as set out above, and to pay Mr M £250 in compensation'.

I asked Mr M and Barclaycard to send me any further evidence or comments to consider.

Mr M replied saying he agreed with my provisional decision. Barclaycard didn't respond.

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 neither party has sent me anything further to consider, I see no reason to depart from my provisional decision. So, for the reasons given in my provisional decision, I uphold this complaint.

Putting things right

Barclaycard should contact the credit reference agencies that are reporting data about this account on Mr M's credit file and ask them to remove missed payment markers in 2018 for May, June, September and October. They should also pay Mr M an amount for the inconvenience this matter has caused him.

My final decision

I uphold this complaint and direct Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Barclaycard to:

- contact both of the credit reference agencies that are reporting Mr M's data for this

account, and clearly set out that no missed payments should be recorded for May, June, September and October 2018; and

- pay Mr M a total of £250 for the inconvenience he's been caused by their failure to engage adequately on this complaint. This total includes the £100 already agreed following our investigator's view.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 13 October 2023.

Daniel Picken
Ombudsman