

## **The complaint**

Miss C, trading as J, complains about the way that TSB Bank plc handled her business bank account.

## **What happened**

Miss C originally held two business bank accounts with TSB before closing one account. When Miss C opened the second business bank account in late 2022, she had issues logging on and using the account. Miss C also found she wasn't receiving One Time Password (OTP) notifications by text, so experienced ongoing issues making online payments.

After Miss C raised her concerns with TSB, it managed to resolve the problems logging on to the second account and paid £100 compensation.

Miss C found that she still couldn't make online payments so she complained again to TSB in November 2022. After not hearing anything, Miss C chased TSB for a response in early 2023. TSB told us that as it had already sent a final response in October 2022, when Miss C complained again about the same issue, it didn't respond.

TSB sent Miss C a final response in February 2023 apologising for the upset caused and awarding £50 compensation. TSB said it couldn't see any errors on its side which would have caused the problems not receiving the OTP notifications. But TSB said Miss C could contact the digital team for further help if needed.

When our investigator first considered Miss C's complaint she thought TSB had already paid and offered to do enough to put things right.

After Miss C provided further information, our investigator reconsidered her view and recommended that TSB pay a further £150 compensation. This was on the basis that TSB missed an opportunity to update Miss C's mobile number when she complained again in November 2022. So, it took another complaint to TSB in early 2023, for Miss C's incorrect mobile number to be updated.

Our investigator noted that TSB had agreed to consider any expenses that Miss C had incurred due to the problems if she submits evidence of these.

TSB has provided a copy of a recording with Miss C from October 2022 and says that its decision about the complaint remains the same. As TSB doesn't agree with the investigator's recommendation, the complaint has come to me to make a final 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.

First, I'm aware I've set out the background to this complaint in less detail than the parties and I've done so using my own words. I'm not going to respond to every single point made by all the parties involved. No discourtesy is intended by this. Instead, I've focussed on what I think are the key issues here.

Our rules allow me to take this approach. It simply reflects the informal nature of our service as a free alternative to the courts. If there's something I haven't mentioned, it isn't because I've ignored it. I haven't. I'm satisfied I don't need to comment on every individual argument to be able to reach what I think is the right outcome.

I think it's agreed that TSB has made some mistakes with Miss C's second business account so my decision focusses less on what has gone wrong and more on whether TSB should do more than it already has to put things right.

Although I can see that TSB has already paid a total of £150 compensation, I agree with the investigator that this doesn't adequately reflect the impact the mistakes have had on Miss C. This is because the problems that Miss C has had with the online payments isn't the only difficulty that she faced. When Miss C opened the second account, TSB told her that it should have been linked to the first business account she held. And that this created issues when trying to log on and use the second account. For this, TSB paid Miss C £100 which might have been fair had TSB fixed the problem with receiving OTP texts to make online payments.

However, from listening to the call that Miss C had with TSB in February 2023 – the mobile telephone number it had for her was wrong. I know that TSB doesn't think that it was responsible for the wrong number but I can't be sure that this was the case. Particularly given the fact that in October 2022, TSB had to delete the log in details for the second business account as a workaround for the problems Miss C had encountered trying to log on and use the new account.

As the fix in October 2022 didn't resolve the OTP text issue – Miss C complained again in November 2022. But as TSB thought that this was the same complaint for which it had already sent a final response in October 2022, TSB didn't respond. It seems to me that by taking this approach, TSB missed the opportunity to sort the OTP problem out sooner by updating Miss C's mobile number – as it did in February 2023. I think that this resulted in unnecessary inconvenience and upset when Miss C had to complain again.

For the inconvenience and added stress, I agree with the investigator that an award of £150 on top of the £150 already paid is fair. This takes the total amount of compensation to £300 which sits at the top end of the kind of award the Financial Ombudsman Service might make where the mistake has required a reasonable effort to resolve and where the impact has been felt over weeks. Our approach to awards like this can be found on our website.

TSB has said that it will consider any additional expenses which Miss C incurred because of the issues she faced with the account. If Miss C encounters problems with TSB after submitting evidence of any additional expenses, I don't see why she couldn't make a further complaint. If she was then unhappy with TSB's response, Miss C could come back to the Financial Ombudsman Service for further assistance. Hopefully this won't be necessary.

Finally, when our investigator contacted Miss C in March 2023, Miss C said she'd not received any OTP text codes to make online payments but that she could only test this again when she had to make another payment. If Miss C discovers that she still doesn't receive the OTP text codes when attempting another online transaction – she would first have to raise her concerns with TSB.

**Putting things right**

To put things right, TSB should pay Miss C £150. For the avoidance of doubt, this in addition to the £150 it has already paid.

**My final decision**

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint and direct TSB Bank plc to put things right in line with above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss C trading as J to accept or reject my decision before 6 November 2023.

Gemma Bowen  
**Ombudsman**