

The complaint

Mrs O complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC didn't act on her instructions to transfer her money from her Individual Savings Account (ISA) to an account with another finance provider.

What happened

On 31 March 2023, Mrs O signed a Transfer Authority Form (TAF) to transfer her ISA funds from Barclays to another provider, but the transfer didn't happen. She signed a second TAF on 13 August 2023, but the transfer didn't happen until November 2023.

Barclays issued a final response letter dated 13 September 2023. It said that the TAF it received from the other finance provider was dated in March 2023, but it needed the TAF to be dated in current tax year. It said it had approached the finance provider on more than one occasion and it was still awaiting the relevant documents to be returned. It understood the inconvenience the delays had caused, and because of this it credited Mrs O's current account with £50.

Mrs O wasn't satisfied with Barclays' response and referred her complaint to this service. She said she wanted her money transferred and compensation for the lost interest arising from the delay.

Our investigator didn't uphold this complaint. She set out the timeline of events and said that aside from the initial email being quarantined by Barclays' system, Barclays appeared to have been chasing Mrs O's new finance provider for the information needed to transfer Mrs O's ISA. She noted that there were gaps of more than two months between April and July 2023 and August and October 2023 where the new finance provider did not respond to Barclays' requests for information. Therefore, she thought the only delay Barclays was responsible for was the quarantining of the initial email on the 3 April 2023 and she thought the £50 paid by Barclays was reasonable compensation for this.

Mrs O didn't agree with our investigator's view. She said that Barclays failed to act on the original TAF for 15 days. It then requested information which had already been provided and information which was not required. She said that Barclays failed to request a new TAF to comply with the new tax year in a timely manner and failed to act on the second TAF for 54 days. She thought the compensation of £50 provided was insufficient and disproportionate to the delay attributable to Barclays.

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.

Mrs O first completed a TAF dated 31 March 2023 requesting that her cash ISA be transferred from Barclays to a new finance provider. However, the funds weren't received in her account with the new finance provider until November 2023. This clearly shows that the transfer was subject to excessive delays. This complaint is against Barclays and so I have

looked at the evidence provided to establish to what extent the delays were attributable to Barclays.

Barclays has said that it received the TAF on 3 April 2023, but this was quarantined and it wasn't until the new finance provider chased for a response on 18 April 2023 that the relevant Barclays team was aware of the request. This initial delay is due to Barclays.

Barclays responded to the new finance provider on 18 April 2023, asking it to confirm Mrs O's details as it couldn't locate the customer with the information provided. While the TAF included some of the details requested as this had been quarantined it appears this wasn't available to the Barclays team. It wasn't until 5 July 2023, that the TAF was sent again to Barclays. So, while I find that Barclays was responsible for the initial delay, I think it reasonable that the new finance provider would have responded in a timely way to Barclays request and so I do not hold it responsible for the delay caused by the information not being sent until 5 July.

On 6 July, Barclays asked for the nominated account details so that the transfer could be completed. I think at this time it would have also been reasonable that Barclays would have identified the issue with the TAF being signed in the previous tax year. This wasn't identified until 20 July 2023. However, as Barclays wasn't provided with the nominated account details before the request for the recently signed form was made, I cannot say this additional information request added any additional delay.

Barclays chased the additional information – being the nominated account details and the recently signed form on 27 July 2023. So, while the new provider chased Barclays about the transfer on 4 August 2023 and on 8 August as Barclays hadn't received the requested information, I cannot say that it was wrong to request this again on 8 August and 11 August. While the new provider did re-send the original TAF this didn't contain the information that Barclays had requested.

The new provider chased Barclays again on 18 October. Barclays responded on the same day reiterating the need for a TAF signed in the current tax year. While I note that Mrs O signed a new TAF on 13 August there is nothing to show that this was received by Barclays until 31 October 2020. At this time the required account details were also provided, and the transfer took place.

While I can understand why Mrs O is upset by the delays in her ISA money being transferred, based on the evidence received it appears that the delays (apart from the initial delay arising from the TAF being quarantined in April 2023) were due to Barclays' information requests not being responded to. Once Barclays had the required information the transfer took place.

Given the above, I think the £50 compensation provided by Barclays is a reasonable resolution to this complaint.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs O to accept or reject my decision before 29 March 2024.

Jane Archer
Ombudsman