

The complaint

Miss O complains BCON SOLUTIONS LTD (“BCON”) didn’t assist her in locating a payment she’d asked it to send.

What happened

A summary of what happened is below:

BCON provides a money transfer service.

Miss O made two separate payments of £103 on 7 July 2023 to BCON from her bank account with another bank, L. She needed BCON to send the money onto her account in Nigeria.

Miss O could only locate one of the payments, so she contacted her bank and BCON about this. L said both payments had debited her account and hadn’t bounced back. So, it didn’t think the issue lay with it – it suggested she take the matter up with BCON. Miss O gave BCON this information in August, together with a copy of the documentation L had sent her.

In response, BCON said it only had a record of one payment but had contacted its agent who she had used, to see what it could find. Miss O continued to press BCON about her missing funds but didn’t think it was doing enough to help her. She said many of her communications were ignored and it was taking too long to resolve the issue.

In October, she referred her complaint to us, asking us to take a look.

BCON told us that the problem lay with their intermediary bank. And that they had on several occasions contacted them with regards to the other payment. However, to avoid prolonging this matter it would pay Miss O the missing amount now. The payment was made on 30 January.

Miss O asked our investigator about the trouble and upset she’d also been caused, so our she went onto issue an opinion on what BCON needed to do resolve the complaint.

Whilst she noted BCON had refunded Miss O, she felt it should have been proactive early on and recommended it pay £150 for the distress and inconvenience caused and 8% interest on the missing funds.

BCON didn’t agree. It said it had endeavoured to assist but the intermediary bank hadn’t been responsive. It also understood from Miss O that she’d settled her complaint when it had paid reimbursed her.

The case was put forward for a 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.

Having done so, I've decided to uphold this complaint for the following reasons:

- Miss O had evidence from her bank that two payments had left her bank account, using the same account details. Given one payment reached BCON, there's no explanation why the other one wouldn't have, given the details matched.
- Miss O contacted BCON fairly quickly about this and with information she had from L. I understand BCON were using an intermediary to handle the funds for it and so raised a query with it. This was the right thing to do, but as soon as it became clear it wasn't getting any proper engagement, I consider it would have been reasonable to reimburse Miss O, especially in light of the supporting evidence she had.
- As part of my review, I asked BCON for some additional information. There's one message of particular note dated 25 September, which says Miss O's query had been escalated and was being reviewed. It went on to say her account should be credited within 48 hours. So, it's not clear why the credit was then not made.
- I'm pleased BCON eventually reimbursed Miss O but that was a number of months after she had raised the issue and continued to do so. I'm satisfied this caused her unnecessary distress and inconvenience and left her without that money for this period.

Putting things right

Having weighed everything, I consider BCON must take some additional steps to put things right and I agree with our investigator that £150 is fair as this issue went on for many months. As Miss O was also deprived of the use of this money, I think BCON should pay 8% interest from 10 August 2023 to the 30 January when the funds were paid back. I've selected 10 August as I can see Miss O sent her paperwork from L to BCON around that time and I have allowed for a couple of days for BCON to have acted on it.

My final decision

My final decision is I uphold this complaint and require BCON SOLUTIONS LTD to pay Miss O £150 and 8% interest in line with what I have said above in the putting things right section above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss O to accept or reject my decision before 11 November 2024.

Sarita Taylor
Ombudsman