

## **The complaint**

Mr S complains about the information recorded on his Experian Limited credit file in relation to mortgages in his name.

## **What happened**

Mr S has three mortgage accounts showing on his credit file with Experian. Two mortgages are registered by a business I'll refer to as B1 and were opened in 2003. The third mortgage is with a business I'll refer to as B2 and was opened in November 2019. Mr S has confirmed the mortgage with B2 is a buy to let (BTL), not a residential mortgage.

Last year, when Mr S accessed his Experian account and credit file, he found a section called "your residential information" that said the age of his mortgage was three years and 11 months. But Mr S says that his residential mortgage has been open with B1 since 2003 so the information Experian provided is wrong.

Mr S contacted both B1 and Experian and made the point his residential mortgage arrangements have been in place since 2003. Mr S has told us that he raised concerns with B1 and was initially told an error had been made. But B1 later claimed no error had been made and said Mr S should go back to Experian.

Experian looked at Mr S' complaint and issued a final response. Experian said the mortgage noted in the "your residential information" section of its dashboard related to the most recent mortgage account opened with B2 in November 2019. Experian confirmed that whilst the mortgage may not have related to a property Mr S had ever lived at, the account was registered by B2 at his current address. As a result, the mortgage was being correctly reported on Mr S' credit file. Experian added that there was no evidence B1 had ever made any changes to the start date of Mr S' mortgages with it on his credit file.

An investigator at this service looked at Mr S' complaint. They noted that Mr S thought Experian's dashboard was misleading as it was using the BTL mortgage with B2 in the "your residential information" section. But the investigator confirmed that the mortgage shown was the most recent mortgage Mr S had opened. The investigator also noted that the dashboard Mr S has complained about isn't seen by lenders when a credit search is completed. The investigator said lenders would see a full copy of Mr S' credit file and apply their own lending criteria. The investigator wasn't persuaded that Experian had made any mistakes with Mr S' credit file or treated him unfairly and didn't uphold his complaint.

Mr S asked to appeal and said Experian had acknowledged an error and referred him to B1. Mr S added that his mortgage with B2 was a BTL and that he'd never resided at the property address. Mr S also said that the way information was recorded on his Experian credit file made it appear as if he'd only resided at his home for three or four years which wasn't right. As Mr S asked to appeal, his complaint has been passed to me to make 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.

I'm aware I've summarised the events surrounding this complaint in less detail than the parties involved. No discourtesy is intended by my approach which reflects the informal nature of this service. I want to assure all parties I've read and considered everything on file. I'm satisfied I don't need to comment on every point raised to fairly reach my decision. And if I don't comment on something, it's not because I haven't considered it. It's because I've focused on what I think are the key issues. My approach is in line with the rules we operate under.

I'm sorry to disappoint Mr S but I haven't found any evidence that shows Experian has made mistakes with the mortgage information recorded on his credit file. I'll explain why.

Experian and our investigator have already confirmed that B2's mortgage was opened in November 2019 and, as the most recent mortgage on his credit file, is noted in the section "your residential information." I appreciate the mortgage with B2 is a BTL mortgage. But the entry information about the B2 mortgage shows the date it was opened, the amount Mr S borrowed and a record of his repayments. Experian has confirmed that all mortgages held by an individual will be recorded on their credit file regardless of the property address they're actually secured against. B2 is reporting the mortgage against Mr S' credit file along with his home address. That's not the same as saying B2's mortgage is secured against Mr S' residence. I'm satisfied that's accurate and haven't seen anything that leads me to conclude Experian has made a mistake by reporting the mortgage recorded by B2 on Mr S' credit file.

I think Experian makes a reasonable point when it says that the screen Mr S is complaining about isn't visible to businesses that carry out credit searches against him. When a business carries out a credit search it will be given access to Mr S' full credit file which shows he has three mortgages, including the dates they were opened. Two mortgages are shown with B1 that were opened in 2003 and one with B2 that was opened in 2019 which appears correct. Other information, like electoral roll registration dates, is also used to show how long a consumer has lived at their residence.

I understand Mr S has concerns about being rejected for credit, but I haven't seen evidence that shows there are any mistakes with the way his mortgages are reported by Experian.

I'm sorry to disappoint Mr S but as I haven't seen anything that shows Experian has made errors in the way its reporting mortgages on his credit file and I'm satisfied it dealt with his enquiries and complaint fairly, I'm not telling it to do anything else.

### **My final decision**

My decision is that I don't uphold Mr S' complaint

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 14 October 2024.

Marco Manente  
**Ombudsman**