

The complaint

Miss R is unhappy that Metro Bank PLC closed her account and won't explain why.

What happened

Miss R held three accounts with Metro, and in December 2023 she applied to Metro for a new savings account. Following this application, Miss R received a letter from Metro which said that they were no longer willing to provide banking services to her and that her existing Metro accounts would all be closed in seven days' time. Miss R wasn't happy about this, especially as Metro hadn't given any reason for their actions. So, she raised a complaint.

Metro responded to Miss R and confirmed that they were no longer willing to provide banking services to her and said that they didn't feel they'd acted unfairly by closing her accounts as they had. Miss R wasn't satisfied with Metro's response, so she referred her complaint to this service.

One of our investigators looked at this complaint and noted that Metro weren't obliged to give Miss R the detailed explanation as to why they'd chosen to end the banking relationship with her as she would like. And our investigator didn't feel that Metro had acted unfairly in how they'd managed the situation as a whole. Miss R remained dissatisfied, so the matter was escalated to an ombudsman for 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.

When Metro received Miss R's application for a new savings account, they assessed that application by considering what they already knew about Miss R from their existing banking relationship with her but also by obtaining new information about Miss R from external agencies. And it was following this assessment of Miss R's application that Metro made the decision to no longer offer banking services to her, and to close her accounts accordingly.

Miss R would like to know specifically why Metro made the decision to end the banking relationship. But Metro aren't obliged to provide a detailed explanation to Miss R as she would like.

However, Metro have given this service the reason why they chose to no longer provide banking services to Miss R. And while I'm not permitted to pass this information to Miss R, I can confirm that I've assessed Metro's rationale and that I consider it to be reasonable.

Section 11.2 of Metro's terms and conditions details the circumstances under which Metro can close a customer's accounts. And I'm satisfied that Metro's reason for closing Miss R's accounts is in line with those terms.

All of which means that I don't feel that Metro have acted unfairly here as Miss R contends. Ultimately, it's for Metro to decide if they're willing to continue to provide banking services to

Miss R or not. And, as explained, I'm satisfied Metro have a fair reason for choosing to end the banking relationship with Miss R, and that the ending of the banking relationship is both permitted by Metro's terms and has been conducted in accordance with them.

I realise that this may be frustrating for Miss R, and I can only encourage her to review information held on her by external agencies which might have influenced what happened her. But because I don't feel that Metro have acted unfairly in acting how they have, I won't be upholding this complaint. I hope that Miss R will understand, given what I've explained, why I've made the final decision that I have.

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 Miss R to accept or reject my decision before 25 July 2024.

Paul Cooper
Ombudsman