

## **The complaint**

Ms I complains about the service she received from Monzo Bank Ltd.

## **What happened**

Monzo sent Ms I her debit and credit cards through the post. But when Ms I received them, she says the cards had been sent in a flimsy serrated packaging which had been opened. Ms I was concerned about the security of her account, so she contacted Monzo via its 'chat' facility. When she didn't get a reply, she raised a formal complaint.

Monzo accepted that it should have responded to Ms I's 'chat' message. It apologised and said feedback would be given to the relevant teams. In recognition of the poor customer service, it credited Ms I's account with £40 compensation. But it didn't think it had done anything wrong when sending out the cards. It said it was unable to track the condition of the packaging in transit as these are sent to and delivered by the Royal Mail. But it added that the cards could have only been used when activated by Ms I, so her account was not at risk.

Unhappy with the outcome, Ms I referred his complaint to us. At this point, Monzo offered to pay Ms I a further £60 – making the compensation payment £100 in total. It said this was in recognition of the poor customer service. It maintained that it had handled the posting of the cards appropriately.

Our investigator put the offer to Ms I, but she didn't accept it. So, the investigator went on to consider the merits of the complaint. Having done so, she found that £100 compensation was fair.

Ms I didn't agree. In summary, she said that she expected Monzo to put in place measures to prevent fraud on her account, take responsibility and be accountable for the choice of its packaging, and ensure it makes reasonable adjustments for the safe delivery of cards. Ultimately, Ms I asked for her complaint to be escalated so it's been passed to me to decide. our text here

## **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 reached the same overall conclusion as our investigator. I know Ms I will be disappointed as I can she feels strongly about this matter, and she has genuine concerns about the security of her account. So, I'll explain why.

### *Card security*

I appreciate Ms I's concerns about her cards being delivered in packaging which had already been opened. So, I can understand why she feels Monzo should adjust its processes to ensure safe delivery of cards.

Monzo has explained that Ms I's cards were sent to her using the Royal Mail. As Royal Mail is a well-known and well-established postal service, I consider this to be a reasonable way for Monzo to send debit and credit cards to customers.

Ms I has said that packaging Monzo uses isn't sufficient, and she's provided evidence the packaging her cards were delivered in was open across a serrated section. But from what I've seen the packaging is in keeping with the type of packaging I would expect businesses to use for this purpose. I've not seen anything to suggest the package was open before it was dispatched. Rather, I think it's most likely the damage to the packaging was caused while in transit. It's unfortunate that packaging – while in transit, can be damaged, opened and, in some cases, go astray. But overall, I don't think I can safely conclude that this is something I can hold Monzo responsible for.

Ms I has mentioned the consequences of what might have happened had the cards fallen into the wrong hands. While I understand Ms I's concerns, I've not seen anything to suggest that anything like that happened here. And I can only consider what happened not what might have happened. In any event, Monzo has explained that the cards would have needed to be activated by Ms I using her banking app before they could have been used. And I find this to be a reasonable fraud prevention measure.

Overall, I don't think I can fairly or reasonably require Monzo to depart from its usual methods and procedures for sending out debit and credit cards. And I think – by having a card activation process in place, I'm persuaded Monzo has reasonable procedures in place to help prevent fraud should a card be intercepted by a third-party.

Consequently, I don't find Monzo has done anything wrong regarding this aspect of Ms I's complaint.

### *Customer Service*

Monzo has accepted that it should have responded to Ms I's 'chat' message. So, what I need to decide here is if the £100 total compensation payment (£40 paid and a further £60 offered) fairly recognises the impact the customer service failing had on Ms I.

I've reviewed the 'chat' history between Ms I and Monzo. And I've seen that Ms I contacted Monzo on 28 March 2024 setting out her concerns. But I've also seen that her message was closed on 30 March 2024 without a reply being sent. When using Monzo's 'chat' facility, I find Monzo should have responded to Ms I's message in the first instance. And, in not doing so, it let Ms I down. As a result, Ms I had to go to the trouble of raising a formal complaint to get an answer to her concerns.

But I've also taken into account that Monzo acknowledged Ms I's formal complaint within a reasonable timeframe and that it responded with the required complaint handling timescales. So, while I appreciate the answer Ms I received about her complaint wasn't what she was hoping for – overall, I find that £100 fairly recognises the frustration and inconvenience caused to Ms I in having to wait for the response to her concerns. So, I won't be asking Monzo to pay any further compensation to that that has already been offered.

### **Putting things right**

Monzo has already paid Ms I £40 compensation. It should now pay Ms I the additional £60 it has since offered (total £100).

**My final decision**

For the reasons given above, I uphold this complaint in part. Monzo Bank Ltd should now settle this complaint as set out above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms I to accept or reject my decision before 3 October 2024.

Sandra Greene  
**Ombudsman**