

The complaint

Miss M complains that Vanquis Bank Limited gave her incorrect information about a new credit card being sent to her.

What happened

Miss M says that on 27 February 2024, two transactions had debited her account, and then re-credited her account later that day. She says she hadn't received any communication from Vanquis that her card had been stopped, so she rung them, and she says she explained that she needed the card by 6 March due to a landmark birthday for a family member, and they had plans.

Miss M says the call handler told her that they would send her a card as a priority and she wouldn't need a new Personal Identification Number (PIN), but she didn't receive the card by the time she needed it. Miss M says she received a PIN on 7 March 2024, and a new card on 8 March 2024.

Miss M says she tried to use the Vanquis card the following day for a family meal, but the payment was declined. Miss M rung Vanquis who told her the card would take up to an hour to activate, so she ended up having to pay the restaurant with her debit card, which the funds were earmarked for bills, and the declined payment with the Vanquis card caused much embarrassment. Miss M says that due to what's happened with Vanquis she's still catching up with everything and she's told us about the effect this has had on her based on her health and financial situation. Miss M made a complaint to Vanquis.

As Vanquis did not respond to Miss M's complaint, Miss M brought her complaint to our service. Our investigator said she could see that Miss M had been paid a £50 payment due to fraud on her account, and Vanquis put Miss M back in the position she would've been in had the disputed transactions not happened, as they also refunded the disputed transaction amounts. She said Miss M had been given incorrect information, she'd been left without a card, and Vanquis didn't respond to her complaint. She said Vanquis should pay Miss M a further £100 compensation.

Vanquis responded to our investigator's view, and they said that there had been several times that Miss M's account had been flagged to their security department due to potentially fraudulent transactions. They said each time a block had been applied to the account until they were able to confirm with Miss M if the transaction was genuine or not. They said they were unable to agree Vanquis could be held responsible for Miss M's new card being used and causing a delay due to them issuing a new card. So the complaint was passed to me to make a decision on it.

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'd like to thank Miss M for the information she's provided us, especially her credit card

statements, and detailed information about her health, her financial circumstances, and her personal circumstances. I won't go into detail about her personal situation in this decision to help protect her identity, but I can assure her that I've read everything she's told us.

From the credit card statements Miss M has sent us, it does appear that Vanquis put Miss M in the position she would have been in if the fraud didn't happen, and they also paid her £50 compensation on 11 March 2024.

But Miss M has also told us that she was told incorrect information over the phone by Vanquis about when she would receive her new Vanquis card. So while I can't say Vanquis were wrong to block the account to protect her account when she was a victim of fraud until she got her new card, Miss M has told us the impact that this incorrect information had on her.

I asked Vanquis if they weren't prepared to pay Miss M the further £100 our investigator suggested as compensation, to send me the call recordings so I could hear what happened. But Vanquis did not send me the call recordings by the deadline I gave them. I also extended the deadline as I wanted to hear exactly what was discussed on the calls, but Vanquis did not send the calls by the extended deadline.

So although I can't prove exactly what was said on the calls, in the absence of these calls, then I have no reason to doubt what Miss M has told us. So if she did tell Vanquis when she needed the card by, and Vanquis told her incorrect information about sending this by priority, and she wouldn't get the PIN, and gave her the wrong timeframes then this would have distressed her when she didn't receive the new card for when she really needed it by.

Miss M was also distressed as Vanquis did not respond to her complaint with an outcome investigation. But I was pleased to see this didn't impact her ability to bring her complaint to our service as Vanquis had given her referral rights to our service.

So in the absence of the phone calls, I'm persuaded that compensation is due to Miss M for the distress the wrong information she's told us she received from Vanquis would have had on her. I'm persuaded that Vanquis should pay Miss M a further £100 to recognise the impact that this would have had on her, so it follows I'll be asking Vanquis to put things right for Miss M.

Putting things right

Our investigator has suggested that Vanquis pays Miss M a further £100 compensation, which I think is reasonable in the circumstances.

My final decision

I uphold this complaint. Vanquis Bank Limited should pay Miss M a further £100 compensation for distress.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss M to accept or reject my decision before 14 November 2024.

Gregory Sloanes
Ombudsman