

The complaint

Mr L complains Tesco Personal Finance PLC trading as Tesco Bank treated him unfairly when it shared information with National Hunter, referencing 'refer'.

What happened

A summary of what happened is below.

Mr L applied for a savings account with Tesco in September 2023. During the application there were some discrepancies with the address. Tesco spoke to Mr L about this to verify some of the information. Mr L confirmed that as a landlord and property owner, he had multiple properties at which he received mail. Satisfied with this, Tesco opened the account.

Mr L later looked into what data was held about him and potentially affecting his creditworthiness. Upon doing so, he saw Tesco had shared information with National Hunter with the details refer and so he raised a complaint.

Tesco said that because the application had been referred, it would be correct that the referral was recorded at National Hunter, so it didn't uphold this complaint point. Dissatisfied with this, Mr L asked us to take a look. He said, he didn't think the information was fair and he was concerned that this may affect any applications for credit.

Tesco gave us its submissions. It said that whilst the original information triggered a referral, which was still visible to Mr L, it had also updated the submission to 'clear'.

One of our investigators reviewed the complaint but didn't think Tesco needed to do more. She agreed with Tesco's position on both the information it had recorded and updating the entry to 'clear' based on the available evidence. Mr L disagreed and asked that his case be passed to an ombudsman.

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.

In line with this service's role as a quick and informal resolution service, I'll be focusing on the crux of the complaint.

Mr L provided information to Tesco when he applied for an account with it. There were some discrepancies in the information. Whilst he was able to provide an explanation, it was this that triggered the sharing of the information. So, in the circumstances, I think the information was correct.

Moving on however, Tesco says that this was later updated to clear after it spoke to Mr L, but he isn't convinced. He says he can still see the word 'refer' on his DSAR. However, it's important to understand all the information in its entirety. The refer details are under the

classification for the submission but National Hunter's own guidance says that the classification isn't the status of the account. The notes go onto say that there are four possible labels that can appear on the right-hand side which are determined by the lender as a result of their underwriting and decision making. It is these labels that are termed as the 'status'.

The possible labels are, clear, inconsistency, auto decision and refer. I've checked Mr L's DSAR, and it shows 'clear' along the right-hand side. Given all of this, I'm satisfied Tesco has updated its submissions appropriately to a clear status and so there's no error. It follows, I won't be requiring Tesco to do anymore to resolve the complaint.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr L to accept or reject my decision before 27 November 2024.

Sarita Taylor
Ombudsman