

The complaint

Mr H complains TSB Bank plc (TSB) failed to correct an issue on his banking app.

What happened

Mr H says he holds a bank account with TSB and for the past 18 months he hasn't been able to authenticate payments using his banking app. Mr H says after making a payment online and then attempting to authorise this on his banking app, it shows as being timed out.

Mr H says this has been extremely frustrating and upsetting for him and despite undertaking various workarounds as requested by TSB, none of these have worked. Mr H also says the service he has received from TSB when trying to resolve matters and lodging a complaint, has been very poor. Mr H feels TSB have had long enough to sort out this issue but can't provide him with any timescale to resolve it.

Mr H says TSB's offer of £150 to compensate him for the trouble and upset caused doesn't go far enough.

TSB says there is a known problem for a small number of its customers regarding the approval of card online payments. TSB says it has suggested to Mr H that he de-registers his mobile banking app and if that doesn't work he should come into a branch to try and understand what the issue is, as other customers have resolved the problem this way.

TSB apologised for the poor customer service when Mr H made his complaint and agreed to pay him £150 for the inconvenience this matter caused him.

Mr H wasn't happy with TSB's response and referred the matter to this service.

The investigator looked at all the available information and upheld Mr H's complaint. The investigator felt TSB hadn't provided the level of service and support she would expect, and significant time had passed causing Mr H an unreasonable amount of inconvenience here.

The investigator felt a more appropriate level of compensation should be £450 in total, so a further £300 would need to be paid.

Mr H initially accepted the investigator's view, but TSB wanted to try and work around the issue with Mr H before agreeing to the extra £300 of compensation suggested, so the matter was referred 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.

Having done so, I will also be upholding this complaint and I will explain how I have come to my decision.

I can understand it would be very frustrating for Mr H to try and make card payments online

only to find it was impossible to authorise these as they timed out almost instantly. When looking at this complaint I will consider if TSB provided sufficient support to Mr H to try to put matters right, and if the level of compensation it paid is sufficient here.

The first thing to say here is TSB have agreed it could have dealt with Mr H's initial complaint more effectively and paid him £150 for that. It has also made clear to this service that there is an ongoing technical issue with a small number of its customers when authorising online card payments in the banking app. TSB says for the majority of cases deregistering the mobile banking app and ensuring the time zone is correct, usually resolves the issue but this for some unknown reason doesn't seem to be working for Mr H.

I can see TSB have attempted some workarounds with Mr H but unfortunately these haven't resolved the problem and I can understand how frustrating that must be for him. That said there is a limit to what I can ask of TSB here, as this is clearly a technical glitch affecting Mr H and it's not possible for me to tell TSB it must put that right - only that it works with Mr H to try and resolve matters.

I agree with the investigator that given all that has happened here TSB could have gone out of its way a little more to ensure a meeting or planned phone call was booked to suit Mr H's personal timings, rather than stipulating set dates its technical staff were available. After all this has been going on for over 18 months now.

TSB have now agreed to work with Mr H to try and resolve this, although a branch visit, which was one of the options, isn't suitable for Mr H as the local branch has closed and he has health issues, so another form of contact is needed here.

As I said earlier it's not possible for me to make TSB correct the technical issues here, but it is important Mr H now works with TSB if he wants to see if the matter can be resolved, otherwise sadly as Mr H has suggested, he may need to make alternative banking arrangements.

That said I do feel TSB could have handled this better and like the investigator I agree a further sum of £300 should be paid to reflect the inconvenience this matter has caused Mr H, but on the understanding that draws a line under any further compensation requests regarding this same issue.

While neither Mr H nor TSB will be happy with my decision, I am satisfied this is a fair outcome here.

Putting things right

I instruct TSB Bank plc to pay Mr H a further £300 in compensation for the trouble and upset caused, bringing the total compensation to £450.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint.

I instruct TSB Bank plc to pay Mr H a further £300 in compensation for the trouble and upset caused, bringing the total compensation to £450.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr H to accept or reject my decision before 21 October 2024.

Barry White
Ombudsman