

The complaint

Mrs O complains HSBC UK Bank Plc ("HSBC") failed to transfer her funds to a nominated account after she explained she couldn't deposit the cheque it had issued to her previously. So Mrs O says HSBC caused undue delay.

Mrs O says HSBC's failings have caused her considerable loss, financial hardship, distress, and inconvenience. To put things right, Mrs O wants 8% simple interest on her funds for the time she was deprived of them and £10,000 compensation.

What happened

The details of this complaint are well known by both parties, so I won't repeat them again here in detail. Instead, I'll focus on setting out some of the key facts and on giving my reasons for my decision.

HSBC closed Mrs O's account held with it in 2023. HSBC issued a cheque for the closing balance of around £94,000 to Mrs O in December 2023. Mrs O tried to pay the cheque into her account with Bank A in April 2024. Bank A refused to credit the cheque to her account and began a review of her account.

On 17 April 2024 Mrs O called HSBC and asked them to cancel the cheque and to re-issue a replacement. HSBC agreed to cancel the cheque and make payment electronically to another of her account with "Bank B". But HSBC didn't get all the information they needed from Mrs O to do so. Mrs O was asked to visit her local branch to complete the paperwork. The funds were transferred on 2 July 2024 to Bank B.

Unhappy with the delays - and given the background to a previously resolved complaint against HSB - Mrs O complained. HSBC upheld Mrs O's complaint.

In short, HSBC accepted it had provided poor service and caused delay in transferring Mrs O's funds. HSBC added that Mrs O's claim for £10,000 compensation wasn't in line with industry guidelines – but to put things right and to say sorry for its failings, it would like to offer her £500.

Mrs O didn't agree and referred her complaint to this service. One of our Investigator's looked into it, and they didn't recommend it was upheld. In short, their key findings were:

- *Whilst I accept that Mrs O is unhappy with the time HSBC took to return her balance, based on all the information and evidence available to me, I am not persuaded that requiring HSBC to pay Mrs O compensation for the distress and inconvenience this caused her would be an appropriate outcome to her complaint*
- *HSBC has made an offer to Mrs O. So, I leave it to HSBC and Mrs O to decide whether, outside of our service's involvement, Mrs O wants to accept it*

Mrs O didn't agree with what our Investigator said. She wants HSBC to pay her interest for the time she was unfairly deprived of her funds and £10,000 compensation for the

humiliation inflicted upon her.

As there is no agreement this complaint has been passed to me to decide.

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 have decided not to uphold this complaint. I will explain why.

I note HSBC accept it provided poor service and caused delay to processing Mrs O's transfer to her nominated account with Bank B. But after considering what she's said, the content of HSBC's review, and all the information available to me, I don't find awarding Mrs O any compensation would be fair or appropriate.

I understand Mrs O would want to know the information I have weighed to reach this finding. But I am treating this information in confidence, which is a power afforded to me under the Dispute Resolution Rules (DISP), which form part of the Financial Conduct Authority's regulatory handbook.

DISP 3.5.9R states:

The ombudsman may:

(1) exclude evidence that would otherwise be admissible in a court or include evidence that would not be admissible in a court;

(2) accept information in confidence (so that only an edited version, summary or description is disclosed to the other party) where he considers it appropriate

That means I make no direction for any compensation including interest for the deprivation of funds to be paid to Mrs O.

My final decision

For the reasons above, I have decided not to uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs O to accept or reject my decision before 16 December 2024.

Ketan Nagla

Ombudsman