

The complaint

Miss B complains that Home Retail Group Card Services Limited, trading as Argos Card, failed to allocate a payment to her Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) account.

What happened

Miss B has an Argos Store Card. She called Argos Card in February 2024 to make a payment to her BNPL account but the £100 she paid was paid towards her normal credit balance instead.

Miss B referred her complaint to this Service, but our investigator didn't think Argos Card had done anything wrong. As Miss B disagreed, her complaint has been referred to me, 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.

Where the information I've got is incomplete, unclear, or contradictory, as some of it is here, I have to base my decision on the balance of probabilities.

I've read and considered the whole file, but I'll concentrate my comments on what I think is relevant. If I don't comment on any specific point, it's not because I've failed to take it on board and think about it but because I don't think I need to comment on it in order to reach what I think is the right outcome.

Argos Card have explained that their telephone advisors can't take payments. They've explained that when Miss B called them, she would have been transferred to an automatic payment system where she would have been presented with the option of paying the money towards her normal credit balance or towards a BNPL item. I can see from Argos Card's system notes that Miss B had used that service before. I think it's likely that Miss B, therefore, selected the option to make the payment towards her credit balance as that appears to have been the only way the money could have been credited. I'm not persuaded, on the information provided, that Argos Card have made a mistake.

Since the complaint has been referred to this Service Miss B has explained that she is struggling to make payments towards the account, she suggests that Argos Card should have realised that payments weren't affordable for her. That's not something Argos Card have had the opportunity to consider, and Miss B will need to refer that complaint point to them first. If she remains dissatisfied with their response, they will give her the option to refer that new issue to this Service, but until that time I can't consider it.

My final decision

For the reasons I've given above, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss B to accept or reject my decision before 28 October 2024.

Phillip McMahon
Ombudsman