Financial Ombudsman Service

The complaint

Mr A has complained that Barclays Bank UK PLC won't reimburse him for a cash withdrawal where he explained the correct amount did not dispense.

What happened

In March 2024, Mr A tried to withdraw £500 at an ATM. £500 debited his account, but he's explained he only received £400 in cash. He double-checked how much had come out of his account, then reported the matter straight away.

Barclays got some evidence from the ATM's owner and turned down the dispute.

Our Investigator looked into things independently and asked Barclays for more information. Barclays didn't provide it. Our Investigator upheld the complaint. Barclays asked for a final decision, so the complaint's 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.

Mr A has explained that the cash withdrawal was not correctly executed. So under the relevant rules, it's for Barclays to show that it was correctly executed and was not affected by, for example, a technical breakdown. And, thinking about what's fair and reasonable, Barclays should be able to show that it was entitled to debit the full £500 from the account.

I do appreciate that Barclays is limited by the information it can get from the ATM's owner. But I must nonetheless base my decision on the evidence at hand, and make findings where evidence is missing.

Barclays did get some electronic records, which appear to show that the withdrawal went through correctly. But they've not provided the other information I'd usually expect in order to be reasonably satisfied that the withdrawal was correctly executed.

For example, Barclays says the ATM owner told it that the machine had no other issues. But it has not evidenced this. It has not provided evidence which shows or substantiates that the machine balanced correctly. So for all I know, there could have been a surplus of money in the machine which was Mr A's. Similarly, I've not been given sufficient information to show that some of Mr A's cash did not get stuck or end up in the purge bin.

So while we do have some technical data about the withdrawal, we do not have sufficient evidence that the machine balanced properly, or that some of the cash didn't end up in the purge bin, or that the machine was not suffering from technical issues around the time.

On the other hand, Mr A has provided clear, plausible, and consistent testimony about being £100 short. His actions – such as twice checking how much had actually debited his account and reporting the matter without delay – support his testimony. And I've found no good reason to disbelieve him.

So based on the evidence at hand, I'm not sufficiently satisfied that this payment was correctly executed. So I find that Barclays should refund the disputed £100 shortfall, and compensate Mr A for the time he was without this amount.

Putting things right

I direct Barclays Bank UK PLC to:

- Reimburse the claimed £100 shortfall; and-

- Pay simple interest to Mr A on that £100, at the rate of 8% simple a year, payable from the date of the withdrawal until the date the £100 is reimbursed to him. This is to compensate Mr A for the time he didn't have his money.

  If Barclays considers that it's required by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) to deduct tax from that simple interest, it should tell Mr A how much tax it's taken off. It should also give Mr A a tax deduction certificate if he asks for one. Mr A may be able to reclaim the tax from HMRC if he doesn't normally pay tax.

My final decision

For the reasons I've explained, I uphold Mr A's complaint, and direct Barclays Bank UK PLC to put things right by doing what I've said above. If Mr A accepts the final decision, Barclays Bank UK PLC must carry out the redress within 28 days of the date our service notifies it of the acceptance.

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