

The complaint

Mr C complains that Nationwide Building Society didn't honour a current account switch incentive.

What happened

Mr C held an account with Nationwide and an account elsewhere. Nationwide introduced a £200 incentive payment – available to new and existing customers, to switch an account to it. But having switched the account he held elsewhere to Nationwide in June 2024, Mr C was told he didn't qualify for the incentive payment.

Mr C complained to Nationwide. But it said Mr C didn't qualify as he had previously benefitted from an incentive payment when he switched his other account to it in 2021. It said the terms and conditions of the incentive payment was clear.

Unhappy with the Nationwide's response Mr C referred his complaint to this service. He said he felt Nationwide's marketing was misleading. And that Nationwide should have told him before the switch completed that he didn't qualify for the incentive as it was clear that is the purpose of him switching his account.

One of our investigators looked into it. But she didn't uphold the complaint. She found Nationwide's switch incentive terms and conditions to be clear and that Mr C should have reasonably been aware of the terms before he executed the switch.

Mr C asked for an ombudsman's final decision, so the complaint has been passed to me.

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've reached the same conclusion as the investigator for the same reasons. I appreciate Mr C will be disappointed, so I'll explain why.

It's not in dispute that the switch incentive was available to existing customers. I've looked at the '*Nationwide Building Society Member Exclusive Current Account Online Switch Offer*' terms and conditions which were relevant in June 2024. And were available to Mr C when he initiated the account switch. These say:

'How do I qualify for the offer?.....

4. You must meet all the requirements set out in these terms. You will not qualify for this offer if any of the exclusions set out in paragraphs 7 or 8 apply to you.....

When won't I qualify - what are the exclusions?.....

7. You will not qualify for this offer if:

- *You have used the Current Account Switch Service since 18 August 2021 and previously benefited from our current account online switch offer.*

I've also seen that Nationwide's marketing material on its website contained similar information.

I find that Nationwide provided enough information for Mr C to be aware of the qualifying criteria for the incentive payment – and it what circumstances he wouldn't qualify.

Nationwide has provided its records which I'm satisfied show that Mr C switched a previous account to Nationwide on 24 September 2021. And I'm also satisfied that his bank statement shows that he received a £125 switch incentive payment.

I note Mr C has said that Nationwide should have contacted him before the switch completed to let him know he didn't qualify for the switch incentive. But as this wasn't an advised sale, I think it was for Mr C to check if he met the criteria before he executed the account switch.

Overall, I find that Mr C wasn't entitled to the incentive payment when he initiated an account switch in June 2024. Having already received a switch incentive payment in September 2021, he didn't meet the switch incentive criteria. And I find Mr C ought to have been aware of this when he applied for the switch as I've found the terms of the incentive payment to be clear.

My final decision

For the reasons above, I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 11 November 2024.

Sandra Greene
Ombudsman