

The complaint

Ms I complains Barclays Bank UK PLC (“Barclays”) closed her accounts and did so without explanation.

Ms I says Barclays’ actions caused her significant distress and inconvenience at an important time in her life.

What happened

The details of this complaint are well known by both parties, so I won’t repeat them again here. Instead, I’ll focus on giving my reasons for my 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 have decided not to uphold Ms I’s complaint. I’ll explain why.

Banks in the UK, like Barclays, are strictly regulated and must take certain actions in order to meet their legal and regulatory obligations. They are also required to carry out ongoing monitoring of an existing business relationship. That sometimes Barclays needs to restrict, or in some cases go as far as closing, customers’ accounts.

Barclays is entitled to close an account just as a customer may close an account with it. But before Barclays closes an account, it must do so in a way, which complies with the terms and conditions of the account. The terms and conditions of the account, which Barclays and Ms I had to comply with, say it could close the account by giving her at least two months’ notice. And in certain circumstances it can close an account immediately or with less notice.

Barclays has sent me a copy of the notice to close letter it sent Ms I in May 2024. I note she was given two months’ notice with no restrictions to her access. Barclays has also explained why it decided to act in this way and provided me with supporting evidence. Having carefully considered this, I’m satisfied Barclays decided, and closed, the accounts in line with its terms and conditions. Given its obligations, I’m also satisfied its acted fairly and reasonably in doing so.

I can understand why Ms I would want a detailed explanation for why Barclays acted in the way it did. But Barclays is under no obligation to do so. I would add too that our rules allow us to receive evidence in confidence. We may treat evidence from banks as confidential for a number of reasons – for example, if it contains security information, or commercially sensitive information. Some of the information Barclays has provided is information I consider should be kept confidential.

Ms I is particularly unhappy about the impact the closure decision had on her mental health, the distress it caused her, and how it affected her ability to study. But as I think Barclays hasn’t done anything wrong, I see no basis to award any compensation for the distress and

inconvenience she's suffered.

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 Ms I to accept or reject my decision before 25 April 2025.

Ketan Nagla
Ombudsman