

The complaint

Mr S complains that he's unable to add his Bank of Scotland plc credit card to Apple Pay.

What happened

In or around June 2024 Mr S upgraded his phone from an iPhone 12 to an iPhone 15. His three debit cards (all held with Bank of Scotland) transferred to his Apple wallet with no issues, but his Bank of Scotland credit card didn't.

Mr S contacted Bank of Scotland, who advised him that the issue was with Apple. Mr S spoke to Apple, who advised him that it was the bank who had declined the card.

On 9 June 2024 Mr S complained to Bank of Scotland. Initially Bank of Scotland said it couldn't provide an exact reason why Mr S couldn't add his card but that it may have been because of a block on the card and said this could've been better explained. Bank of Scotland offered £50 compensation. Mr S declined this and ordered a new card.

On 17 June 2024 Mr S complained to Bank of Scotland again. He said he'd received his new card, but he still wasn't able to add it to Apple Pay.

Bank of Scotland issued a final response on 5 July 2024. It said that as part of the provisioning request, Apple sent data and codes which were used by its fraud system to reduce risk during the provisioning process. Bank of Scotland said the code that Apple sent through when Mr S was attempting to add the credit card to Apple Pay was triggering its fraud system. Bank of Scotland said it hadn't made any errors and said that Mr S's next step to resolve the issue would be to contact Apple again to query what information they were sending during the registration process that would flag up on the banks fraud system.

Mr S remained unhappy and brought his complaint to this service. He believes the issue lies with the bank and wants them to do more to help.

Our investigator didn't uphold the complaint. He said that whilst he appreciated Mr S's frustration, he didn't think Bank of Scotland had done anything wrong.

Mr S didn't agree. He said that since referring his complaint to this service there had been a further development, which was that he'd lost his new iPhone in a canal and had purchased a replacement, only to find that he was unable to add any of his Bank of Scotland cards (debit or credit) to Apple Pay, but he had been able to add a credit card from another provider. Mr S said that Bank of Scotland had re-opened his complaint. Mr S said he wasn't looking for compensation but resolution.

Mr S then advised this service that he'd been back to Apple to see if there was anything else which could be done to resolve the issue. Apple suggested that he change the name of the iPhone in Settings. Mr S said that having done this, he was able to add the Bank of Scotland cards to Apple Pay and the issue was now resolved. Mr S said this proved that the issue had nothing to do with the codes sent by Apple as Bank of Scotland had claimed, but was because the way the banks systems were set up for Apple Pay meant that you had to have

your name in the name of the iPhone settings otherwise it wouldn't work. Mr S said this was never explained to him by Bank of Scotland. He said he wanted compensation for the time he'd wasted as a result of the banks inability to identify and resolve the problem.

Because Mr S didn't agree I've been asked to review the complaint.

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.

I know it will disappoint Mr S, but I agree with the investigators opinion. I'll explain why.

I've read and considered the whole file, but I'll concentrate my comments on the points which are relevant to my decision. If I don't mention a specific point its 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.

Firstly, I'd like to acknowledge how frustrating this experience has been for Mr S. I'm pleased that with the assistance of Apple he's been able to add all of his cards to Apple Pay now.

My role here is to look at what happened, review all the available information and determine whether Bank of Scotland made an error or treated Mr S unfairly or unreasonably.

I've reviewed the information provided by Bank of Scotland. It has said that the information being sent to it when Mr S tried to register the card with Apple Pay flagged its fraud systems. It has explained the process which takes place when a customer adds a card to Apple Pay. When a request to add a card is made to Apple Pay, this sends a message to Apple Pay who carry out their own risk checks. Apple Pay then send the request to the network (in this case, Mastercard) and Mastercard then send the request on to Bank of Scotland. The Apple Pay request would include its own risk assessment. Bank of Scotland carry out its own risk assessment and consider any risk information provided by Apple Pay before deciding whether to approve or decline the request.

Bank of Scotland has explained that the process of adding a card to Apple Pay involves passing messages between the three parties (Apple Pay, Mastercard and Bank of Scotland) which includes eligibility checks, and security and risk measures. Bank of Scotland has reviewed the attempts made by Mr S to add his card to Apple Pay and has found that the request was rejected due to fraud rules. It has said that these are fraud rules which are also followed by Apple.

Having reviewed the information, I haven't seen anything to suggest that Bank of Scotland made an error here or failed to follow its procedures correctly.

Bank of Scotland has accepted that there were some service issues in explaining why the request was being declined when Mr S first contacted them about this issue. It has offered £50 compensation for this and has recently confirmed that this offer remains open should Mr S wish to accept it.

I appreciate that Mr S feels that Bank of Scotland failed to identify the real issue here. He's said that the explanation provided to him by Bank of Scotland regarding the codes that Apple was sending wasn't the reason for the request being declined. He's also said that the issue was caused by the way that the banks systems are set up for Apple Pay.

I understand Mr S's strength of feeling about this. However, I haven't seen any evidence that

the issue was caused by the banks systems. Even if it was, this service can't tell a bank what security and risk systems it should have in place or how these systems should be operated.

Taking everything into account, I've not seen anything to persuade me that Bank of Scotland has made an error here or that it has treated Mr S unfairly. I'm unable to uphold the complaint.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold the complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 31 January 2025.

Emma Davy
Ombudsman