

The complaint

Mr O is unhappy with Yorkshire Building Society's (YBS) handling of his Individual Savings Account (ISA) transfer request.

What happened

In April 2024 YBS received a request to transfer the funds held in Mr O's ISA to another provider. YBS rejected the request as the address they held on file for Mr O didn't match the address held by the new provider.

On 26 May 2024 Mr O contacted YBS to ask why the transfer was rejected. He explained it was the second time it had happened, and the new provider said they didn't know why it was rejected. YBS said Mr O would need the 10-digit YBS account number only and not his account number or sort code as this would lead to an automatic reject.

On 29 May 2024 Mr O asked for his concerns to be escalated to the complaints department as he felt he had complied with the instructions correctly. The complaints team responded on 31 May 2024 advising the transfer was rejected due to an address mismatch. They explained the address on their account and the new provider's account needed to match and asked him to check the new provider's account to ensure it didn't need updating. YBS then issued their final response on 28 June 2024. They explained they didn't feel they had made an error or treated Mr O unfairly.

Mr O contacted YBS in early July 2024 to ask which address they held for him and he later referred his complaint to this service. Our investigator didn't think YBS had done anything wrong in rejecting the ISA transfer request, so he didn't uphold the complaint. Mr O asked for an ombudsman's decision, so it has 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.

When Mr O first got in touch with YBS about the transfer it wasn't clear to him why it had been rejected. There was some confusion on YBS' part, and they didn't provide him with the correct information. About a week later, after they'd looked into it further, they contacted him and explained it had been rejected due to an address mismatch. Mr O has explained that this contradicts what the new provider had told him. And he wasn't persuaded by this as in another complaint where he transferred an ISA to YBS the transfer was successful despite the address mismatch.

I understand why Mr O may feel this isn't correct given what happened before. However, I am only investigating this complaint about YBS' actions in relation to the transfer request from them to another provider.

YBS have provided information to support their position that the new provider held a different address to the one they held on file. And I'm satisfied that the address was an important piece of information as it helps identify an individual to ensure the transfer is going to the

correct account, therefore providing a level of security for customers. Mr O hasn't said the address held by YBS is incorrect and I note that it matches the address we hold. It therefore follows that as the address didn't match, and that wasn't as a result of YBS' error, I don't think YBS acted unfairly in rejecting the transfer.

There was confusion in the initial contact with Mr O and YBS weren't clear about the reason why it had been rejected at that point. They instead referenced key information that was required in a transfer request. But I can see they did quickly follow this up to explain that it was related to the address mis match. They also provided further reasons why a transfer could fail, such as when the 10-digit reference isn't supplied, but I think this was to provide some context to the communication they'd had with Mr O online rather than saying that was the reason for the rejection. I also note YBS said they had made the new provider aware of the reason for the rejection and I can see from correspondence between Mr O and the new provider they were aware there was a mismatch of information. YBS also said they had previously explained the requirement of the address matching to Mr O.

Overall, I'm satisfied that YBS didn't act unfairly when rejecting the transfer request. They followed up to explain clearly why the transfer had failed and shared the reasons with the new provider. Whilst I think it would have been good customer service to have shared this with Mr O directly, YBS say this is the role of the new provider. I don't have evidence that supports that, but I can see Mr O was made aware by the new provider. YBS had also previously explained the address requirement, so Mr O was aware of it, so given this, I think this is reasonable in the circumstances.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr O to accept or reject my decision before 10 March 2025.

Karin Hutchinson
Ombudsman