DRN-5285354

Financial Ombudsman Service

The complaint

Mrs D complains Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited provided incorrect and contradictory valuations of her stocks and shares Individual Savings Account (ISA).

What happened

In March 2024, Mrs D and her Independent Financial Adviser (IFA) became aware of discrepancies in the valuations Aviva provided for her ISA. When Mrs D complained, Aviva explained a system error had caused the inconsistencies. Their final response provided a brief explanation about what had gone wrong. They apologised and said they were taking action to fix the issue.

Mrs D brought the complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service and one of our Investigators looked into things. Our Investigator thought Aviva had not taken into account the impact their error had on Mrs D as the system error meant she felt confused and insecure about the value of her ISA. They thought Aviva should issue corrected client reports showing the true value of her ISA, and provide a correct client report showing Mrs D's portfolio balance for 2024. And that Aviva should also provide a clear explanation where the sum of £36,285 received into her ISA in March and April 2023 came from. Our Investigator thought Aviva should pay Mrs D £100 to reflect the level of confusion and insecurity she felt at the time.

Initially neither party responded to our Investigator. Aviva has since accepted the outcome our Investigator reached. Our Investigator then asked Mrs D whether she accepted the proposed outcome. As Mrs D did not respond, the complaint was 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.

It is not the role of the Financial Ombudsman Service to punish a business when they get things wrong. Instead, we can consider what went wrong, what Aviva did to put things right and whether there was any impact on Mrs D. I will consider whether Aviva treated Mrs D fairly and if their communications were clear and not misleading. My decision will focus on what I believe is at the crux of the complaint – that is; the valuations Mrs D obtained from Aviva's platform were different from the client reports Aviva provided to her IFA.

I understand Mrs D may be disappointed, but for very much the same reasons as our Investigator, I have decided Aviva should pay Mrs D £100 to resolve the complaint. They should also send Mrs D the corrected client reports and supply her with statements showing the correct valuations for her investment for the years to October 2022 and October 2023. Aviva should also explain clearly why the error occurred and confirm to Mrs D that this issue has been fixed. They should also provide an explanation of the Bed & ISA transactions that took place in March and April 2023. I believe this will give Mrs D comfort that the valuations and client reports will provide consistent information. I will now explain why this is a reasonable outcome to resolve the complaint.

There's no dispute the valuations Mrs D obtained from Aviva's platform were different to the valuations Aviva provided to her IFA in a client report around the same time. Aviva accepts this was caused by a known error within their system. In October 2021, when a fund held by Mrs D was closed, Aviva credited the value of the fund into the cash holdings within her ISA. Unfortunately, whilst this transaction was correctly reported in Mrs D's ISA balance on Aviva's platform, the system error meant the client report provided to her IFA double counted the amount. This is why the valuation Aviva provided to Mrs D's IFA was different.

Aviva say they have now fixed the system error that caused the inconsistencies in valuations. Aviva's apology for the system error doesn't take into account the short-term impact of their failure to tell Mrs D plainly and simply what was happening with her investments and the upset caused to her. I have decided it would have been reasonable for Aviva to have sent a correct copy of the client reports to Mrs D, and her IFA, as this may have given her comfort that the valuations on the platform were the correct ones. As I have seen no evidence Aviva did this, they should now send her copies of the corrected client reports for the years 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

It would have helped Mrs D understand what had happened if Aviva had made it clear the system error caused the client reports provided to IFA's included the double counting of returned funds I have referred to earlier in my decision. Aviva accept they should have done this earlier than they did. Therefore, I have decided Aviva should pay Mrs D £100 to reflect the level of confusion and insecurity she felt at the time.

I understand Mrs D is upset about the difference in the valuations she and her IFA received, and that this would have caused some confusion when she met with her IFA. However, I have not seen anything to persuade me Aviva's error caused her a financial loss.

The 2022/2023 client report provided to Mrs D's IFA refers to "Bed and ISA" investments made in March and April 2023. I am mindful that Mrs D may not have seen a corrected report, but I am persuaded the entries reflect an internal transfer of funds during this period. Regardless of this, Aviva should provide Mrs D with written confirmation that this is the case as this may help her understanding of what happened at this time.

My final decision

For the reasons above, I decided to uphold Mrs D's complaint. To resolve the complaint, Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited should:

- Pay Mrs D £100 to reflect the confusion and insecurity she felt because of the system error;
- Send Mrs D copies of the corrected client reports for 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024;
- Provide Mrs D with a clear and simple explanation for the Bed & ISA transactions from 2023; and,
- Confirm to Mrs D the system error has now been fixed and provide a clear explanation why the payment they made into her ISA in October 2021 had been duplicated.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs D to accept or reject my decision before 19 August 2025.

Paul Lawton
Ombudsman