

The complaint

Mr P complains TSB Bank plc hasn't paid him the switch bonus he was told he'd receive.

What happened

Mr P says he switched his main account to TSB in 2024 having been told by an agent over the phone that he'd get a switch bonus if he did so. He says he didn't get the bonus and complained.

TSB says it looked into Mr P's complaint and said he wasn't eligible for the switch bonus because he'd already received a bonus when he switched to TSB in August 2023. And that his account needed to be open before the offer was withdrawn, which it was not. TSB subsequently accepted that Mr P had submitted the switch before the offer was withdrawn – TSB had processed the switch the following day which was after the offer was withdrawn – but remained of the view that he wasn't eligible because he'd benefited from a switch bonus in August 2023. Mr P was unhappy with TSB's response and so complained to our service.

One of our investigators looked into Mr P's complaint but didn't uphold it. Mr P asked for his complaint to be referred to an ombudsman for a decision. His complaint was, as a result, 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.

I'm satisfied that TSB offered to pay a £100 incentive to customers who switched to them provided they satisfy all the criteria of the offer. I'm also satisfied that one of those criteria was that they hadn't received an incentive or benefit for switching to TSB since 1 October 2022. Mr P had done so – he received £125 in September 2023 when he switched to TSB in August 2023. Objectively, in other words, I'm satisfied that Mr P didn't qualify. In this case, however, that's not quite the end of the story.

On 3 September 2024 Mr P rang TSB to ask whether or not he'd qualify for the incentive even though he already had a joint TSB account and a credit card with TSB. The agent confirmed that if he was switching his main account to TSB he would get the benefit even if he already had accounts with TSB. Mr P replied "really?" and the agent put him on hold for two minutes. The agent then confirmed he would. I've listened to that call.

I can understand why Mr P feels he should be paid the incentive. I do, however, agree that the terms and conditions of the incentive scheme are clear that someone like Mr P – because they'd already received a previous incentive since 1 October 2022 – doesn't qualify for another incentive. I agree that the agent could have asked more questions – in particular about when Mr P had opened his existing accounts – but I don't agree that the call was enough to make Mr P eligible for an incentive which he wasn't, in fact, eligible for. Mr P's surprised reaction at the time suggests he knew he wasn't, but that's not something I find decisive either way. It's simply an observation.

For the reasons I've given, I agree that this complaint shouldn't be upheld.

My final decision

My final decision is that I'm not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr P to accept or reject my decision before 15 April 2025.

Nicolas Atkinson
Ombudsman