

The complaint

Mr L complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC ('Barclays') closed his account without any warning or notice.

Mr L is also unhappy with the complaints process and service he received from Barclays after he lodged a complaint regarding the closure of his account.

What happened

I'm aware Mr L has also had a credit card with Barclays, but this decision will solely focus on the issues relating to Mr L's current account.

In July 2024, Barclays wrote to Mr L informing him that following a review, Mr L's bank account had been closed. The letter also explained that Mr L needed to visit a branch with some identification to collect his remaining funds.

Mr L was able to withdraw the funds that remained in his account, a few days later. Mr L says he asked branch staff for an explanation regarding why his account had been closed but he wasn't provided with one.

Mr L telephoned Barclays to make a complaint because he was unhappy that he hadn't been given any notice or explanation before his account was closed. The adviser Mr L spoke to said they would log the issue and provided Mr L with a reference number. The adviser didn't in fact log a complaint following Mr L's telephone call, so Barclays failed to issue a final response to the complaint.

Mr L telephoned Barclays again in October 2024 and explained he hadn't received a reply to his first complaint and reiterated that he was unhappy about the closure of his account. Barclays issued a Summary Resolution Communication ('SRC') to Mr L following the phone call. The SRC acknowledged that Mr L had raised concerns and went on to confirm the complaint had been closed.

Mr L contacted our service to investigate the complaint. He explained that in addition to the complaint regarding the closure of his bank account, he was unhappy with Barclays' complaints process and overall service he had received. Mr L explained that there was a lack of clear information from different advisers he spoke to. And that there had been delays caused by Barclays because it hadn't logged his complaint appropriately when he contacted the bank in July. So, Mr L had been left to wait an additional eight weeks before our service could begin to investigate his complaint.

One of our Investigators looked into Mr L's complaint and decided not to uphold it. In summary, they said:

- Barclays were not obliged to provide a reason regarding why it had decided to close Mr L's account and had done so in line with the account terms and conditions.

- Barclays didn't need to give Mr L notice before closing the account and had acted fairly in the circumstances.

- The way that Barclays handled Mr L's complaint relates to complaint handling and this isn't an activity that our service has the jurisdiction to consider, so this aspect of the complaint wasn't commented on.

Mr L asked for a final decision from an Ombudsman, so his 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.

Having done so, I have decided not to uphold this complaint. I appreciate this will come as a disappointment for Mr L, so 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 means banks need to restrict, or in some cases even close customers' accounts.

Barclays is entitled to close an account, just as a customer may close an account with it. But it must do so in a way that adheres to the terms and conditions of the account. The terms and conditions of the account says that Barclays can close the account by giving Mr L at least two months' notice. And there are also certain circumstances, where the account can be closed immediately or without notice.

I would add that Barclays are also obliged to carry out Customer Due Diligence (CDD) which generally covers the entire period of its customer relationship and includes establishing the purpose and intended nature of the business relationship. In this instance Barclays has shared why it decided to close Mr L's account with our service and why it didn't carry out additional CDD checks. Having carefully considered this, I'm satisfied Barclays acted appropriately in the circumstances and closed the account in line with its terms and it did so fairly. I acknowledge Mr L would like Barclays to provide the reasons for its decision to close his account. But Barclays is not obliged to provide this information to Mr L.

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 that we considered should be kept confidential.

I appreciate Mr L is unhappy with the way Barclays handled his complaint. And Barclays has acknowledged that it didn't log his complaint as it should have done when Mr L contacted it on the first occasion. Mr L has told us he had to telephone Barclays on two separate occasions to make a complaint and repeat everything he had already told it previously.

Even if I were to consider the merits of the customer service and complaint handling issues Mr L complains about, I don't find awarding Mr L compensation would be fair or appropriate in the circumstances.

I understand Mr L would want to know the information I have weighed to reach this finding. But I am treating this information in confidence, which is a power afforded to me under the Dispute Resolution Rules (DISP), which form part of the Financial Conduct Authority's

regulatory handbook. Therefore, I'm not going to ask Barclays to award Mr L any compensation for any distress and inconvenience that may have been caused.

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 Mr L to accept or reject my decision before 13 June 2025.

Khadijah Nakhuda
Ombudsman