

The complaint

Mrs H complains that TSB Bank plc didn't explain to her that an international payment to her account wouldn't be accepted.

What happened

Mrs H explains that she and her husband sold a property abroad and the proceeds were paid into a joint account held there. And she arranged for part of the money (over £169,000) to be sent to her sole account at TSB. They returned home on 21 July 2024 and on 22 July 2024 visited a branch and Mrs H told TSB that the money was due. She is unhappy that when the payment reached TSB on 26 July 2024 it was rejected because the beneficiary's name wasn't hers but her husband's. And that no mention of the need for this to be her name was made by TSB in the branch.

TSB said it hadn't made a mistake. It had a record that Mrs H had attended the branch and asked if the payment would be accepted due to the amount involved. And it said that she was told that provided all the details on the international payment were correct there would be no reason for this to be rejected. TSB said that the sending bank would have been responsible for confirming the details of the payment. TSB said that as the beneficiary's details didn't match it was rejected. And this was due to its obligation to comply with regulations and ensure that it had systems in place for customer identification.

Our investigator didn't recommend that the complaint be upheld. He said that TSB had followed its processes. And the payment would likely have been accepted had the beneficiary been stated as Mrs H. TSB said it had emphasised the need for accurate details although the issue about the beneficiary's name may not have been explicitly discussed.

Mrs H didn't agree and wanted her complaint to be reviewed by an ombudsman. She said that at no time had TSB asked her if the name on the payment matched hers. And that all she was told was that there wouldn't be an issue receiving the money but that there would have been checks had such a sum instead been paid out from her account. Mrs H said that there was a lack of communication and that it was her word against that of TSB.

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.

This is a complaint about TSB, and I'm not able to look into the actions of the sending bank abroad. I understand from Mrs H's testimony that the payment had already been sent when she visited the branch. And that she was wanting to tell TSB that it was due especially given the amount.

It's not in dispute that TSB followed its processes when the payment was received. And rejected this because the name of the beneficiary of the payment didn't match. It needs to ensure it complies with relevant regulations and legislation. And I don't agree that as Mrs H has said it ought to have contacted her before rejecting the payment for this reason.

I can't know exactly what happened when Mrs H was in a branch. I don't think it was unreasonable for TSB to expect the sending bank to make any checks about the payment before it was sent. And I don't think TSB ought then to have checked those details unless Mrs H had specifically asked it to. TSB said that it told Mrs H that the details needed to be accurate but not that it discussed the beneficiary's name with her. But even had it done so I understand the payment had already been sent with the incorrect beneficiary details and couldn't be altered.

I appreciate Mrs H is very dissatisfied with what happened, and that the payment was returned, and she didn't know where it was for several days. And that to resend it would involve further fees. But for the reasons I've given I don't find TSB made a mistake or that its actions were unreasonable in the circumstances. So, I know Mrs H will be very disappointed when I say that I won't be asking TSB to do anything more.

My final decision

My decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs H to accept or reject my decision before 23 April 2025.

Michael Crewe
Ombudsman