



## **The complaint**

Miss K's unhappy that Barclays Bank UK plc trading as Barclaycard ('Barclaycard') placed an arrangement marker on her credit file and misinformed her that this would be removed.

Miss K wants the arrangement marker removed from her credit file.

## **What happened**

Miss K closed her credit card account. This led to an arrangement in January 2018 for payment of the balance outstanding, which was cleared in February 2023.

Miss K later asked Barclaycard why they'd reported the Credit Reference Agencies ('CRAs') that her credit card account was in an arrangement, as this was affecting a mortgage application. Barclaycard agreed to remove the arrangement marker and when they didn't, Miss K complained.

Barclaycard responded that they'd given Miss K misinformation about removing the arrangement marker. Barclaycard paid £400 to Miss K for the distress and inconvenience this had caused her.

Miss K wasn't satisfied and referred her complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service. Barclaycard consented to us looking into this matter.

Our investigator concluded that Barclaycard had adequately informed Miss K that if she proceeded with the arrangement it would be recorded on her credit file, so he didn't think Miss K had been treated unfairly. Our investigator thought that Barclaycard's payment of £400 for the distress and inconvenience they'd caused Miss K was fair and reasonable in these circumstances.

Miss K said she didn't think the timeline of events and the trouble she'd been caused had been fully considered, so the matter came 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.

I've taken into account any relevant law and regulations, the regulator's rules, guidance and standards, codes of practice and (where appropriate) what is considered to have been good industry practice at the relevant time.

In doing so I've decided not to uphold Miss K's complaint, for broadly the same reasons as our investigator.

The Information Commissioner's Office ('ICO') sets out guiding principles for businesses reporting arrears, arrangements and defaults. The ICO requires Barclaycard to report an arrangement to make reduced payments to the CRAs, and notify Miss K of this.

I've seen Barclaycard's letters to Miss K dated 30 November 2017 and 8 January 2018 which detail the arrangement for the repayment of Miss K's credit card balance. The first letter says:

*"While we're waiting for the two qualifying payments, we'll continue to let the Credit Reference Agencies (CRAs) know about any outstanding arrears you have on your account. This will affect your credit file, but once your repayment plan is up and running, we'll let the CRAs know you are on a plan. This will still affect your credit file, but it will show that you're working with us to repay what you owe."*

The second letter, which came after Miss K's two qualifying payments, says:

*"We'll tell the Credit Reference Agencies that you've agreed a reduced repayment plan with us. This will affect your credit file, but it shows that you're working with us to repay what you owe. Just remember, if you miss payments whilst on your repayment plan, your credit file will also be affected further."*

I think Barclaycard's letters and credit reporting demonstrate they acted in line with the ICO's guidance, and I don't think they've treated Miss K unfairly here. I consider Barclaycard's reporting fairly and accurately reflects what happened in relation to Miss K's account, so I won't ask Barclaycard to remove this.

Barclaycard accepted they shouldn't have told Miss K they'd remove the arrangement marker. They paid Miss K £400 to recognise her distress and inconvenience. I've considered if this goes far enough in these circumstances.

Miss K gave the Financial Ombudsman Service details to show that she'd been on the phone for many, many hours trying to sort this matter out and Barclaycard had contradicted themselves in correspondence. Miss K was applying for a mortgage and was depending on the promised changes to her credit file. I've reviewed the information Miss K has sent.

Miss K has also said she was upset to be told adverse information being reported for this account might have been removed if she'd not paid. For example, had Miss K's account been defaulted six years ago for non-payment this information would be due to be removed from her credit file. It may help Miss K to know that a default typically impacts a credit file far more significantly than an arrangement.

I've consulted the guidelines the Financial Ombudsman Service applies when making awards for distress and inconvenience. Having done so I think Barclaycard's payment of £400 fairly recognises Miss K's distress and inconvenience here and is in excess of what I might have proposed under the guidelines I follow, had I been making an award.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons I've outlined, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss K to accept or reject my decision before 29 April 2025.

Clare Burgess-Cade  
**Ombudsman**