

The complaint

Mr M complains that Tandem Personal Loans Ltd ('Tandem') provided inaccurate records of his personal loan payments and didn't report accurately to the Credit Reference Agencies ('CRAs').

Mr M wants this correcting and for Tandem to recognise the upset they've caused him.

What happened

Mr M complained to Tandem that he'd made several late payments, but they were only reporting one of these to the CRAs and they'd got the month wrong.

Mr M also complained that his payments were showing as being made on 1 August 2024, which wasn't right.

Tandem apologised and explained that their systems had migrated which meant payment dates were displayed incorrectly. They confirmed they were reporting Mr M's late payments correctly to the CRAs as they gave a month for payments to be brought up to date. Tandem didn't uphold Mr M's complaint.

Mr M wasn't satisfied with Tandem's response and referred his complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service, but our investigator didn't uphold it. She concluded that Tandem's credit reporting was fair, and that their apology for the system error was reasonable in the circumstances.

Mr M asked for an ombudsman to review his complaint and 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.

I know this will disappoint Mr M, but I haven't found that Tandem have treated him unfairly in these circumstances, and so I have decided not to uphold his complaint. I'll explain why.

I've first considered Mr M's submission that his credit file doesn't accurately reflect his late payments.

The Information Commissioner's Office ('ICO') provides guidance that firms should provide monthly updates to the CRAs about the accounts their customers hold.

I think it's important to say that it's then up to the CRAs to decide how to present the information that lenders give to them. CRAs usually, in line with the ICO's guidance, record status codes which reflect the number of months of arrears rather than a missed or late payment.

Tandem explained that they reported information to the CRAs monthly. They said this meant several of Mr M's late payments hadn't been reported, as the payments were made before the monthly report was given to the CRAs.

I can see that Mr M missed a payment that fell due at the end of April 2024. By the end of Tandem's monthly reporting cycle Mr M still hadn't paid this, so Tandem reported one month of arrears in May 2024. As Mr M paid before the next monthly reporting cycle ended, the arrears weren't reported in June 2024.

Mr M's credit file reflects this, as it shows that in April 2024 he was 0 monthly cycles in arrears, and by May 2024 he was 1 monthly cycle in arrears.

Given the ICO's guidance I don't think it was unfair or unreasonable for Tandem to give Mr M until the end of their monthly reporting cycle to bring his account up to date, or to report his account as being one month in arrears in May 2024.

I want to acknowledge Mr M's strong concerns that if Tandem have made a mistake in their reporting of his late payments, then they may have made errors elsewhere. I'm sorry to hear that Mr M's been worried about this and I hope that my independent review offers him some reassurance that Tandem's reporting of his account here is, in my opinion, fair and accurate and in line with industry expectations.

I've next considered the issue in relation to Mr M's payments all showing up as paid on 1 August 2024.

Tandem accept there was a technological glitch when they changed their systems, and they offered Mr M an apology for this. I agree with our investigator that just because a mistake occurs it doesn't mean that compensation is due. However, I've considered whether I think Tandem's apology goes far enough in these circumstances.

Mr M's shown a screenshot of his account showing monthly payments under the wrong date, but it's clear that his payments were still there. So I think he could reasonably see the issue was with the displayed payment date rather than a failure to credit his payments.

I can see Mr M was inconvenienced as he spent time checking his own bank statements to ascertain his payment dates – although I'm mindful he might have been able to access this information more easily had he asked Tandem to provide it.

I acknowledge Mr M's been upset that it's taken Tandem a long time to fix the glitch – but I can't say that this adversely affects Mr M, given he settled his account in August 2024.

Overall, I think Tandem's error caused Mr M a small amount of distress and inconvenience here. In these circumstances, I think Tandem's explanation and apology was reasonable for the issue with the payment dates displaying incorrectly.

Bringing all of this together, I haven't found cause to uphold Mr M's complaint as I think they've treated him fairly in these circumstances. So, I won't ask Tandem to take action here.

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 Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 8 May 2025.

Clare Burgess-Cade
Ombudsman