

## **The complaint**

Mr K complains Lloyds Bank PLC offered him no support despite him gambling in excess of £80,000.

## **What happened**

Mr K has been a customer of Lloyds Bank for many years.

In 2022 Mr K complained to Lloyds Bank about his overdraft saying that it had lent to him irresponsibly. He says he told Lloyds Bank at the time that there were a lot of gambling transactions on his account as one of the reasons why its lending was irresponsible. Lloyds Bank upheld his complaint and refunded interest he'd been charged.

In October 2024 Mr K complained to Lloyds Bank saying that it hadn't done anything to support him despite the fact that he'd been spending tens of thousands of pounds on gambling. In particular, he complained that Lloyds Bank had allowed him to spend his redundancy money on gambling. He said that he'd told Lloyds Bank that he had a problem with gambling in 2022. He was particularly unhappy because Lloyds Bank had stopped him making much smaller payments.

Lloyds Bank looked into Mr K's complaint but didn't ultimately uphold it. Lloyds Bank did, however, apologise for the time it took to look into Mr K's complaint – and offered £100 in compensation by way of an apology. Mr K was very unhappy with Lloyds Bank's response and so referred his complaint to our service.

Following our involvement Lloyds Bank offered an additional £150 in compensation having accepted that it also took too long to deal with a subject access request.

One of our investigators looked into Mr K's complaint and said that they didn't agree that Lloyds Bank needed to have done more saying that he hadn't made Lloyds Bank aware of the fact that he had a gambling problem and the activity on his account wasn't unusual enough to be of concern. Our investigator also said that they didn't think any intervention by Lloyds Bank would have made a difference given a conversation he had with an advisor in August 2024 shortly after receiving his redundancy payment.

Mr K was unhappy with our investigator's recommendation and 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.

Based on the evidence I've seen I'm satisfied that Mr K spoke to Lloyds Bank in 2018 and the conversation they had meant Lloyds Bank had concerns for Mr K. He was identified as a vulnerable customer. I'm also satisfied that Lloyds Bank accepted in 2022 that it had lent to Mr K in an irresponsible way. One of the reasons why Mr K said Lloyds Bank had been irresponsible was because he'd been gambling a lot – he was in financial difficulties and had taken out multiple loans including pay day loans. I've seen nothing to suggest, however, that Mr K said he had a gambling problem that was ongoing. In the calls I've listened to between Mr K and Lloyds Bank, I've heard him saying that his finances were now in a healthy place, that he'd had to work on a lot of things, that he was now stronger mentally and that this had been a dark place in his life. I don't, therefore, agree that Mr K's complaint in 2022 should have put Lloyds Bank on notice that Mr K had an ongoing gambling problem. Quite the opposite – he, in effect, said to Lloyds Bank that he'd moved on and was in a healthier place.

I can see that Mr K received a substantial redundancy payment in August 2024. I can see too that there were a lot of gambling transactions on his account prior to this and that some of the transactions he made after his redundancy payment were larger. But I agree that there was nothing sufficiently unusual in relation to his account that should have been concerning to Lloyds Bank.

I can understand why Mr K is frustrated with Lloyds Bank – it's clear that there were transactions for smaller amounts in relation to which Lloyds Bank intervened which he didn't consider warranted. Yet it didn't intervene when he was gambling away his redundancy payment. I've listened to one of those calls, and I can see that the advisor noticed that Mr K was making a lot of gambling transactions. The advisor asked him whether or not he was in control of his gambling. Mr K's response was that he was fine, he just wanted to make a payment, she was getting a bit personal and it was all over the top. His subsequent responses are impatient – he says all the checks are ridiculous – and he then tells the agent to hurry up. That suggests any other attempts that Lloyds Bank might have made – if it had reason to be concerned – would more likely than not have failed. In the circumstances, I agree that Lloyds Bank couldn't have done more.

### **Putting things right**

Lloyds Bank has offered £250 in compensation for the distress and inconvenience delays in handling Mr K's complaint and subject access request might have caused. I consider that offer to be fair, so I'm going to require Lloyds Bank to pay Mr K £250 in the unlikely event that he'd like to accept.

I appreciate Mr K lost a huge sum to gambling, but I agree it wouldn't be fair to make Lloyds Bank liable. So that part of his complaint I'm not upholding.

### **My final decision**

Lloyds Bank PLC has already made an offer to pay £250 to settle this complaint and I think this offer is fair in all the circumstances given that the only thing Lloyds Bank PLC has done wrong it take too long to handle Mr K's complaint and subject access request.

So my decision is that Lloyds Bank PLC should pay £250.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr K to accept or reject my decision before 21 November 2025.

Nicolas Atkinson  
**Ombudsman**