

The complaint

Mr E complains Monzo Bank Ltd blocked a £2,000 payment he was making to another account he held elsewhere to which he'd already sent a number of payments without issue.

What happened

Mr E has an account with Monzo Bank and a number of accounts elsewhere including an account with a business who I'll refer to as "R" throughout the rest of this decision. He opened his account in October 2024.

Mr E says he tried to transfer £2,000 from his account with Monzo Bank to his account with R on 15 March 2025. He says Monzo Bank blocked the transfer and insisted on him recording a selfie. He did so and was able to transfer the money, but he was unhappy that Monzo Bank had refused the transfer and wanted confirmation that it wouldn't block other payments he was planning to make. He said he received a contradictory response. He complained saying that Monzo Bank had caused additional stress at what was already a very difficult time.

Monzo Bank says it looked into Mr E's complaint and said that it had blocked his payment as it wanted to make sure it was a genuine one. Monzo Bank said Mr E shouldn't have any further issues with the payment, and it should be less likely that this would happen again on the type of payment he'd made. But that if its security systems picked up concerns, the same thing could happen with any payment or merchant. Monzo Bank apologised nevertheless for the inconvenience Mr E had been put to going through the check he went through. Mr E was very unhappy with Monzo Bank's response saying that an apology wasn't enough. So, he referred his complaint to our service.

One of our investigators looked into Mr E's complaint and said that they didn't think Monzo Bank had done anything wrong as his security token had needed refreshing. Mr E didn't agree with our investigator 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 the security token on Mr E's mobile device needed to be refreshed before he attempted the £2,000 transfer he's complaining about. A security token does sometimes need refreshing, and this can be for a number of reasons. I'm also satisfied that because an attempt was made to transfer £2,000 before the security token had been refreshed and a selfie video done, that transfer was blocked. I can understand why Monzo did this – it would have raised concerns as to whether or not the transaction was genuine. In the circumstances, I don't agree that Monzo Bank acted unfairly or unreasonably when it asked Mr E to take a selfie video. I can see that it took him a couple of minutes to complete that process and, more importantly, I can see that this was enough to allow the transfer to then go ahead. I can understand why Mr E wasn't happy – as far as he was concerned he was transferring money to an account in his own name with another business, something he'd done on a number of previous occasions. I am, however, satisfied that the destination of the transfer wasn't, in this particular case, Monzo Bank's concern.

I can see that Monzo Bank told Mr E that it stopped the transfer because it was concerned it might not be genuine. Our investigator gave a more detailed explanation – and so have I. I wouldn't, however, necessarily expect a business to give such a detailed explanation, particularly when it comes to how its security processes operate. So, whilst I can understand why Mr E is now also unhappy that Monzo Bank didn't say there was a problem with his mobile device, I don't agree that Monzo Bank's original explanation wasn't sufficient. And whilst I can also see that Mr E was worried about future transfers he planned to make – at what was already a very stressful time for him – I agree that this isn't a complaint we can uphold as Monzo Bank hasn't ultimately acted unfairly.

My final decision

My final decision is that I'm not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr E to accept or reject my decision before 14 August 2025.

Nicolas Atkinson
Ombudsman