

The complaint

A company, which I will refer to as E, complains that Amazon Payments UK Limited (APUK) wrongly blocked its account.

What happened

E's representatives told us:

- E's access to its APUK account was blocked for 42 days. This caused intense disruption and financial loss to E.
- They acknowledge that APUK wanted to re-verify E's account, but they provided every document that APUK requested within a few hours. APUK took days or weeks to respond.
- APUK kept asking for the same documents, and was also asking for new documents on a weekly basis. APUK did not ask for everything it needed all at once. They consider that APUK took these actions deliberately, with the intention of harming E's business.
- They sent around 50 emails to APUK, and also made phone calls, but APUK ignored them. They also asked around 30 times for financial compensation, but all of their requests were again ignored. They believe APUK is abusing its economic power to cause pain and financial losses for smaller businesses like E.

APUK told us:

- As an authorised payment institution, it is legally required to take reasonable measures to comply with anti-money laundering rules. It does so by conducting regular verification of the identities of the sellers who use its service.
- As part of its verification measures it began a Know Your Customer (KYC) review of E's account on 11 May 2024. It requested various documents from E.
- As at 12 June 2024 it had not received the evidence it needed, so it applied a block to E's APUK account.
- Between 15 May 2024 and 23 July 2024 E's representatives provided multiple documents. However, they did not provide a document that met APUK's requirements until 9 July 2024.
- It reactivated E's APUK payment account on 23 July 2024, and it "would like to apologise for the lengthy registration process which [E] experienced".

One of our investigators looked at this complaint, but she did not uphold it. She explained that in view of the strict regulations that apply to APUK, she didn't think it acted unfairly in

deciding to begin a KYC review. She also thought that APUK had complied with the relevant terms and conditions when it blocked E's account, and that it was reasonable for APUK to have requested further documentation. Overall, she thought APUK had treated E fairly and reasonably.

E's representatives did not accept our investigator's conclusions, and requested that the matter be referred to an ombudsman.

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'm sorry to further disappoint E's representatives, but there is very little I can add to what our investigator has already said. I know they feel strongly about this complaint, but I think our investigator was right to say that APUK treated E fairly in respect of its KYC review and subsequent restriction of E's account.

My view is that APUK was entitled to ask for the documents that it did. I understand why it was not satisfied with the documents it received at first, and so I consider that it was entitled to request additional documents. I know that some of the additional documents APUK requested were very similar to documents it already had, but I have no concerns about that. It is for APUK to decide what information it requests in order to comply with its legal and regulatory responsibilities, and I would not interfere with its decisions unless I thought it was acting unreasonably. In this case, I see nothing unreasonable about APUK's actions.

I am also satisfied that it was fair for APUK to restrict E's account on 12 June 2024. I acknowledge that the restriction caused E significant inconvenience, but I don't think APUK made an error in applying the restriction and so I don't think it would be fair for me to award compensation as a result.

I accept that APUK could have reviewed the document it received on 9 July 2024 more quickly, but I don't think its delay was unreasonable. I can see that APUK has apologised for that delay, and in the overall circumstances I don't think I can fairly ask it to do more.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint against Amazon Payments UK Limited, and I make no award.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask E to accept or reject my decision before 1 October 2025.

Laura Colman
Ombudsman