

## **The complaint**

Mrs D complains Clydesdale Bank Plc, trading as Virgin Money (hereinafter “Virgin”) unfairly closed her account and refused to tell her why.

## **What happened**

Mrs D was a longstanding customer of Virgin and held a current account. She also held a savings account.

In August 2022 Virgin sent Mrs D a letter giving her two months’ notice that her current account would close. Her account closed in October 2022.

Mrs D complained to Virgin in 2024 about the closure. They didn’t uphold her complaint and said they had not made an error and were not going to tell her why they closed the account.

Mrs D feels Virgin may have closed her account because of a police investigation which commenced around that time. She had been power of attorney for her late uncle. Following his passing she says her late uncle’s estranged children raised allegations that she embezzled funds.

After Mrs D’s account closed, she was arrested, charged and says she was subsequently acquitted of any wrongdoing regarding her late uncle’s affairs. She understands from when she was questioned by the police and from a summary of evidence document that a warrant was issued for her Virgin account in 2022 and bank statements seized. She thinks it unfair if her account was closed on this basis.

Our investigator decided not to uphold the complaint. In summary, they concluded:

- Virgin had the discretion to close Mrs D’s account and had given the required notice to close under their terms and conditions, allowing her time to open another account elsewhere.
- Virgin had provided their reasons to our service which they had asked to be kept confidential, which the investigator also felt should remain confidential. The information showed Virgin’s decision to close the account was reasonable and in line with their term and conditions.

Mrs D disagreed with the outcome and asked for a final decision by an ombudsman, so her complaint was given to me to decide. She emphasised she is a law-abiding citizen with no criminal history and is concerned we have not told her Virgin’s reasons.

## **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 decided not to uphold Mrs D’s complaint. I’ll explain why:

Financial service providers, like Virgin, have very important legal and regulatory obligations to meet when providing accounts. Those obligations are broad and include responsibilities to monitor accounts, understand the activity on an account, understand who their customer is, safeguard customers and themselves, and detect and prevent crime and other harm. They will set their own criteria regarding customers, and at least in part frame that criteria around limiting the risk of breaching their obligations. They will sometimes carry out reviews (either event driven or periodic) to these ends.

Virgin carried out a review in relation to Mrs D, the result of which was they decided to terminate their customer relationship with her. I have no doubt this was very concerning to her, given not being wanted as a customer is a challenging and emotive thing to happen, particularly as she had been their customer for a long time. But Virgin do have the freedom and discretion not to keep customers.

Virgin chose not to disclose their reasons to Mrs D for closing her account. And, despite Mrs D's understandable wish to know why, they are not obligated to tell her. They have provided their reasons to our service, and I've decided their reasons are of a commercially sensitive nature, so I won't be disclosing them. I have not taken this decision lightly.

I'm satisfied Virgin's reasons for no longer continuing their customer relationship with Mrs D were not based on a factual error and they fell fairly within the broad discretion they have. I also find they correctly gave her two months' notice in line with their terms and conditions. I appreciate what she has said about not acting criminally, but Virgin were able to exercise their discretion irrespective of whether or not she had been charged with a crime at the time of their decision and irrespective of any later judgement by a court of law.

### **My final decision**

I've decided not to uphold Mrs D's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs D to accept or reject my decision before 17 September 2025.

Liam King  
**Ombudsman**