

## **The complaint**

Mr M complains PROPEL HOLDINGS (UK) LIMITED trading as Quidmarket irresponsibly provided him with a loan when he was already in financial difficulty.

## **What happened**

In February 2024 Mr M applied for a loan with Quidmarket. The application was approved and he was provided with £300. This was to be repaid over three months with a monthly repayment amount of £159.72.

Mr M complained to Quidmarket in May 2025. He said he needed the loan to cover other debts, he was desperate for the cash and he didn't think Quidmarket actually checked if it was affordable for him. He said he was already in financial difficulty, and these repayments added more pressure.

Quidmarket responded to the complaint – they didn't uphold it. They said all applications are manually underwritten and based on the information they obtained from the Credit Reference Agencies (CRAs) and the information Mr M provided at application, their checks were reasonable and proportionate.

Mr M referred his complaint to our Service. An Investigator here looked into things. They found the checks to be reasonable and proportionate, and a fair decision to lend was made. In response to the opinion Mr M said he felt Quidmarket didn't rely on information that reflected his actual financial position and he was reliant on his overdraft and other short-term lenders to get by.

Because an agreement couldn't be reached, the complaint has been passed 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.

Having done so, I'm in agreement with the Investigator. I know this is likely to disappoint Mr M, so I'll explain my reasoning below.

The rules and regulations in place at the time Quidmarket provided Mr M with the loan required them to carry out a reasonable and proportionate assessment of whether he could afford to repay what he owed in a sustainable manner. This is sometimes referred to as an 'affordability assessment' or 'affordability check'.

The checks had to be 'borrower' focused. This means Quidmarket had to think about whether repaying the credit sustainably would cause difficulties or adverse consequences for Mr M. In other words, it wasn't enough for Quidmarket to consider the likelihood of them getting the funds back or whether Mr M's circumstances met their lending criteria – they had to consider if Mr M could sustainably repay the lending being provided to him.

Checks also had to be 'proportionate' to the specific circumstances of the lending. In general, what constitutes a proportionate affordability check will be dependent on a number of factors including – but not limited to – the particular circumstances of the consumer (e.g. their financial history, current situation and outlook, any indications of vulnerability or financial difficulty) and the amount/type/cost of credit they were seeking. I've kept all of this in mind when thinking about whether Quidmarket did what was needed before lending to Mr M.

When Mr M applied for a loan, Quidmarket gathered information regarding his financial circumstances. It recorded that he was earning a salary of around £1768.00 per month and had outstanding debt of around £6,200 – costing him approximately £290 per month. Mr M had one default at the time of application, which was recorded more than 12 months prior but less than 36 months prior.

Mr M declared a monthly expenditure of around £900, but Quidmarket adjusted it to around £980 in line with statistical data – so it was calculated that Mr M had around £790 disposable income per month. This was collated using the information Mr M declared at application, and an external credit check.

I believe the checks Quidmarket carried out were proportionate, and considering the amount being provided to Mr M, and the information they gathered in these checks, as well as the short loan term of three months, I don't think they acted unfairly when providing Mr M with the loan. I say this because it was for a modest amount of £300, and although there were some signs of financial difficulty in the past, everything in recent months had been much improved. It wouldn't be a significant cost for Mr M to repay this credit in a reasonable period of time based on his salary and existing credit commitments.

I appreciate Mr M has said he doesn't believe the data Quidmarket obtained was based on his real financial position, but everything in the CRA check looked fine and the rest of the information was obtained from Mr M's own declarations. So I don't think Quidmarket ought to have reasonably been aware that Mr M's financial position was worse than it appeared to be.

Mr M has asked for our Service to review his current account statements. But because this isn't evidence I think Quidmarket ought to have reviewed at the time, I'm taking those into account. I'm not disputing Mr M's position was worse than it appeared to be, but I need to review things impartially. There is no obligation on lenders to ask to see bank statements, so Quidmarket didn't make an error when they didn't automatically ask to see Mr M's bank statements before approving the application, and there was nothing in the data they did receive that ought to have prompted them to review the statements.

In reaching my conclusions, I've also considered whether the lending relationship between Mr M and Quidmarket might have been unfair to Mr M under s140A of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 ("CCA"). However, for the reasons I've already explained, I'm satisfied that Quidmarket did not lend irresponsibly when providing Mr M with the loan. And I haven't seen anything to suggest that s140A CCA would, given the facts of this complaint, lead to a different outcome here.

So while it'll likely come as a disappointment to Mr M, I won't be upholding his complaint against Mr M for the reasons explained above.

### **My final decision**

It's my final decision that I do not uphold this complaint against PROPEL HOLDINGS (UK) LIMITED trading as Quidmarket.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 7 January 2026.

Meg Raymond  
**Ombudsman**