DRN-5651697

The complaint

Mr A complains Barclays Bank UK PLC's IT outage caused him unnecessary inconvenience.

What happened

Mr A received his wages on 31 January 2025, whilst there was an IT outage at Barclays. Mr A says his card was declined in a restaurant, bills went unpaid, so he had to contact the companies involved and he had to borrow money from family members.

Mr A complained to Barclays, and it responded to say it could see he'd used his card and made transfers over the weekend of the IT outage. Barclays paid Mr A £25 to compensate him for not being able to view his balance.

Mr A didn't feel £25 was anywhere near enough, and felt £250 was fairer. Mr A brought his complaint to this service and an investigator looked into things.

The investigator said they couldn't see any card declines in a restaurant, and Mr A was able to use his card and make transfers. But one of Mr A's payments, to a warranty company, was declined. The investigator thought Barclays should pay a further £50.

Barclays said it didn't agree. Barclays said the warranty payment was successfully taken a couple of days later, so it felt £25 was fair compensation.

Mr A disagreed as well, and said he'd like an ombudsman to decide things. Mr A said he'd send in the emails he sent to the companies where payments were missed.

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.

Barclays had an IT outage over the weekend of 31 January to 2 February 2025. This IT outage appears to have affected different people in different ways. Some people couldn't use their cards, others could, some could transfer money, others couldn't.

Mr A says this was a national outage, and Barclays website was directing people to food banks. Whilst this might be true, I need to look at the individual impact on Mr A. I can't decide Mr A's complaint on how the outage might have impacted others.

Mr A says his card was declined in a restaurant. Mr A also says he didn't buy anything else but was looking forward to buying a takeaway.

Although there may have been some issues with card payments showing on someone's mobile app at the time, there is a record of payments made by Mr A over the weekend.

I’ve looked carefully at Barclays’ records, which ultimately come from Visa, the card scheme, and can see Mr A was able to use his card throughout the day on 31 January.

And on 1 February Mr A was able to use his card in a supermarket and petrol station and use it with a takeaway company. I can see Mr A was able to then use his card again, several times, on 2 February.

Like the investigator, I can’t see any declined transactions for card payments Mr A wanted to make. I also can’t see any cash withdrawals or attempts at cash withdrawals.

I’m not persuaded Mr A’s card was declined in a restaurant because of something of Barclays did. It’s possible there was a problem with the restaurant taking a payment, this might mean there’s no record.

But had Mr A’s card been declined because of Barclays’ IT outage, I’m satisfied there’d be a record of this. So, I don’t think it was Barclays’ fault Mr A’s card was declined.

And I’m unsure why Mr A needed to borrow money when he was able to use his card, but didn’t try and take any cash out. Mr A’s confirmed he has an account elsewhere, and I can see he transferred £180 there on 1 February 2025.

Overall, I’m not persuaded Mr A had no access to money over the weekend due to Barclays’ IT outage.

Barclays says its systems were working on 3 February 2025, the Monday, and Mr A’s direct debits appear to have been paid on this day. I can’t see Mr A missed any payments he normally makes, other than the warranty payment, a regular card payment, not a direct debit.

Barclays accepts this payment was declined and this was because of the IT outage.

I think this decline was Barclays’ error and would have caused some worry for Mr A. Barclays’ final response accepts Mr A’s balance might not have been correct if he viewed it online, and pays compensation for this, but doesn’t compensate for the declined payment.

I think Barclays payment of £25 isn’t enough to compensate Mr A for his balance being incorrect and the failed payment. The investigator said a further £50 was fair, and in the circumstances, I agree a further £50 is a fair and reasonable amount for Barclays to pay.

Mr A says he was put to a lot of effort over the weekend, he had to email several companies about missed payments. The investigator asked Mr A, several times, for copies of these emails but he hasn’t sent them in.

As I said before, I have to look at the specific impact on Mr A, and I can do this by looking at the evidence Mr A and Barclays send to me. I can’t compensate for any emails Mr A says he sent when he hasn’t forwarded them to this service, despite being given the opportunity to.

Mr A also says his credit file may have been affected by missed payments, but he hasn’t sent in any proof of this either.

I can’t see Mr A missed any payments for credit, so I don’t think Mr A’s credit file’s been affected, but again Mr A’s sent in no proof it has.

I can’t ask Barclays to compensate for the potential damage to Mr A’s credit file, but I might be able to if there was a negative marker due to a payment Barclays’ error caused.

Since I have nothing to show any negative effect on Mr A's credit file, but I can see credit payments were made by Barclays, I can't ask Barclays to compensate Mr A for this.

Overall, I'm persuaded Mr A's card was working and he could make transfers over the weekend of the outage.

But I'm also persuaded Mr A's balance wasn't updating properly, and this would have been frustrating, and I'm persuaded Barclays' error caused Mr A's warranty payment to decline.

Looking at the specific impact this had on Mr A, I think an overall payment of £75 to compensate for this is fair.

My final decision

My final decision is I uphold this complaint and Barclays Bank UK PLC should pay Mr A a further £50 in compensation.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr A to accept or reject my decision before 19 August 2025.

Chris Russ
Ombudsman