

The complaint

Mr H complains that RAC Financial Services Limited wouldn't honour a price match guarantee refund promotion for his roadside assistance motor insurance policy. He wants it to pay him a refund.

What happened

Mr H bought a policy with RAC. It said it would give a price match and a 10% refund if a consumer found cheaper cover on a competitor's website within seven days. Mr H provided a quote. But RAC said this was dated more than seven days before he took out his RAC policy, it didn't provide the required information and the level of cover wasn't the same.

Mr H said RAC hadn't made it clear that the quote had to come from the competitor's website and must be for new business, not renewal. Mr H said it was impossible to comply with this as the two companies offered different products and he thought RAC had misrepresented the offer.

Our Investigator didn't recommend that the complaint should be upheld. He thought there wasn't sufficient persuasive evidence to show that RAC had done anything wrong. So he didn't require it to do anything further.

Mr H replied that he thought RAC was inventing terms and conditions to avoid liability for its guarantee. Mr H asked for an Ombudsman's review, so his complaint has come to me for a final decision.

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 was sorry to hear about Mr H's ill-health. I can understand that Mr H felt disappointed that he didn't receive the refund of £88.63 he expected after taking out cover with RAC. And I can see that he's spent time and taken trouble to try and persuade RAC to honour its promotion offer.

From Mr H's account, this problem started when he received a renewal quote for his roadside assistance insurance from the rival company and shopped around for other offers. He saw that RAC was offering a price match guarantee refund promotion. He understood that RAC would match the price for the same cover with the rival company and then add 10% on the difference if a consumer took a policy with RAC.

The wording of RAC's advertisement that attracted Mr H's attention was:

"find the same cover cheaper on [the rival's website] within 7 days and we'll beat it by 10%".

And I take this to mean that a consumer should take out cover with RAC, then look on the rival's website for a quote for the same level of cover within the next seven days. But Mr H didn't do this. He had a renewal quote from the rival company dated six weeks previously.

Mr H said this renewal quote was still current when he took out the RAC policy, and so it was valid. But I don't agree that this complies with RAC's advert requirement as Mr H didn't find

this cheaper cover on the rival's website seven days after he took out the RAC cover. So I don't think Mr H met the offer requirement and RAC weren't wrong to decline it.

Mr H said he had checked with RAC that its offer would apply to his renewal quote, as he saw that RAC's new business quote was much higher than this. And I've looked at the online chat he had with its agent. Mr H explained that he had already cancelled his renewal with the rival company, and he wanted RAC to confirm his calculation of the refund due from the promotion.

The agent asked Mr H for proof of his quote from the rival company made within seven days of purchasing the RAC cover. She told him what details to provide. And then concluded with *"Our team will process your refund"*. Mr H explained that he wasn't yet an RAC member. And the agent said:

"...the refund is not processed online. It'll be processed only when you have purchased the cover and emailed us the information".

I agree that the agent didn't acknowledge that the offer wouldn't apply to a renewal quote already received, but she did explain the advert's requirements and what Mr H needed to do to have his claim validated. So I think she provided clear information, and I can't say she misled Mr H.

Mr H said the rival company insured individuals whilst RAC insured cars, so it wasn't possible for him to buy a like for like policy to meet the advert requirements. But I'm not persuaded by this as RAC provides a list in its price guarantee terms and conditions of the closest equivalent policies. And our Investigator checked that the rival can cover cars as well as individuals.

The validation team then requested specific information from Mr H, but he was unable to provide it. But I won't consider that further here as Mr H hadn't met the basic requirement for the refund, as I've stated above, and so RAC couldn't validate the two quotes. So I'm satisfied that RAC fairly declined to honour the promotional offer as Mr H didn't meet its requirements.

My final decision

For the reasons given above, my final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr H to accept or reject my decision before 23 September 2025.

Phillip Berechree
Ombudsman