

## **The complaint**

Mr J complains that Wise Payments Limited trading as Wise (Wise) unfairly closed his account without providing a proper explanation.

## **What happened**

The detailed background of this complaint is well known to both parties. So, I'll only provide a brief overview of some of the key events here.

Mr J had a multi-currency and investment account with Wise.

In April 2025, to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations Wise decided to review Mr J's account. Whilst it reviewed Mr J's account Wise blocked the account. Following this Wise decided to close Mr J's account immediately. On 15 April 2025 Wise wrote to Mr J to let him know it was deactivating his account in line with the terms and conditions and user agreement.

Mr J appealed to Wise and asked them to review its decision. He said he had always used his account properly and asked Wise why it no longer wanted him as a customer. Wise reviewed everything but maintained its position. And it asked Mr J to nominate a currency so that it could release Mr J's closing balances back to him. And the account could be closed. Wise released Mr J's funds back to him in USD. And liquidated his investments. Mr J complained to Wise. He said Wise had treated him unfairly when they closed his account. In response, Wise maintained its position that it had closed Mr J's account in line with the terms and conditions of the account. And that it didn't have to provide Mr J with an explanation.

Mr J remained unhappy and brought his complaint to our service where one of our investigators looked into what had happened. After looking at all the evidence the investigator didn't uphold Mr J's complaint. In summary they said Wise had closed Mr J's account in line with the terms and conditions. And it didn't have to provide Mr J with an explanation for why it no longer wanted him as a customer. The investigator also said Wise had followed its processes when converting and selling Mr J's funds and investments.

Mr J disagreed. In summary he said:

- He wants Wise to provide a proper explanation for why it no longer wants him as a customer.
- He is out of pocket as Wise liquidated his investments at a time he wouldn't consider beneficial financially, and returned his funds in one currency, leading him to incur currency conversion fees. He wants Wise to refund his losses.

As no agreement could be reached the matter has come 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.

I would add too that our rules allow us to receive evidence in confidence. We may treat evidence from financial businesses as confidential for a number of reasons – for example, if it contains information about other customers, security information or commercially sensitive information. It's then for me to decide whether it's fair to rely on evidence that only one party has seen. It's not a one-sided rule; either party to a complaint can submit evidence in confidence if they wish to, and we'll then decide if it's fair to rely on it. Here, the information is sensitive and on balance I don't believe it should be disclosed. But it's also clearly material to the issue of whether Wise has treated Mr J fairly. So, I'm persuaded I should take it into account when deciding the outcome of the complaint.

As the investigator has already explained, banks and financial business in the UK, are strictly regulated and must take certain actions in order to meet their legal and regulatory obligations. They can broadly be summarised as a responsibility to protect persons from financial harm, and to prevent and detect financial crime. That sometimes means Wise need to review, or in some cases go as far as blocking and closing customers' accounts. The terms and conditions of Mr J's account also make provision for this.

I want to make it clear that I understand why what happened concerned Mr J. I've no doubt it would've come as quite a shock to him, and he would've been very worried to find out that his account had been closed. But I've also considered the basis for Wise's review, which includes looking at the information Wise has shared with our service in confidence, when deciding whether Wise treated Mr J fairly when it decided to close his account.

Having looked at all the evidence, and circumstances I'm satisfied that Wise have acted in line with the terms and its legal and regulatory obligations when it reviewed Mr J's account. So, I don't find Wise treated Mr J unfairly.

It's generally for banks and financial businesses to decide whether or not they want to provide, or to continue to provide, banking facilities to any particular customer. Unless there's a very good reason to do so, this service won't usually say that a bank or financial business must keep customer or require it to compensate a customer who has had their account closed.

Wise have relied on the terms and conditions when closing Mr J's account. I've reviewed the terms, and they explain that Wise can close an account for any reason by giving two months' notice. In certain circumstances, Wise can also close an account without notice, which is what has happened here.

For Wise to act fairly here they needed to meet the criteria to apply their terms for immediate closure – and having looked at these terms and all the evidence that Wise has provided, including the information Wise has provided to this service in confidence, I'm satisfied that Wise did. And it was entitled to close Mr J's account as it's already done. So, it would not be appropriate for me to ask Wise to pay Mr J compensation since I don't find Wise acted inappropriately when it closed his account. And I won't be asking Wise to reopen Mr J's account.

I understand of course why Mr J wants to know the exact reasons behind Wise's decision to close his account, other than what he's been previously been told. And I can see that Mr J has asked Wise to explain itself on several occasions. But Wise doesn't disclose to its customers what triggers a review of their accounts. And it's under no obligation to tell Mr J the reasons behind the account closure, as much as he'd like to know. So, I can't say it's done anything wrong by not giving Mr J this information. And it wouldn't be appropriate for me to require it to do so now.

The crux of Mr J's complaint is that he's unhappy Wise converted the funds in his account into one currency despite him having a multi-currency account. And sold his investments in his jars at a time when Mr J wouldn't have done. Mr J says this has left him out of pocket and he wants compensation.

Clause 21.1 of the Assets Customer Agreement which Mr J agreed to says:

*"We may terminate this Agreement and close your Investment Account or any associated Service by providing you with one month's prior notice, unless we are required by law to act sooner. On the closure date, any remaining Units you hold through Wise Assets will be sold, and the proceeds will be deposited into your Wise Account, unless the law compels us to freeze your Investment Account."*

I've already said that Lloyds acted in line with its terms when it decided to close Mr J's account. So given what the terms say together with the Assets Customer Agreement I don't think Lloyds did anything wrong when it sold Mr J's assets. I note what Mr J says about this and how exchanging the assets in this way will lead to financial loss partly due to currency fluctuations – but he agreed to these terms when opening the account.

Mr J says he has looked at the terms and conditions of his account and hasn't been able to find a term that allows Wise to do what it did with his funds – sell his investments and release Mr J's funds back to him in a single currency. I do think it would have been helpful if Wise had pointed to an explicit term that explained to Mr J what would happen when it decided to close an account. But I can see that Wise has followed its account closure processes which set out that it will ask a customer to nominate a single currency so that it can close an account. And sell stock that a customer has in their jars. From reviewing the statements of Mr J's account, I can see that the investments were liquidated in May 2025 and the values added to the balance and currency converted to USD. So, I don't find Wise acted unfairly.

I note what Mr J says about this and how exchanging the assets in this way will lead to financial loss partly due to currency fluctuations – but Wise doesn't operate in this way. I must highlight it is not within this service's remit to tell a business how to run their closure processes or procedures. It would be the role of the regulator – the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), who have the power to instruct Wise to make changes to their policies and procedures, if necessary.

In summary, I recognise how strongly Mr J feels about what's happened. I don't doubt it has been a frustrating and worrying time. So, I realise Mr J will be disappointed by my decision. But overall, based on the evidence I've seen, I can't say Wise have acted unreasonably and treated Mr J unfairly when it closed his account.

## **My final decision**

For the reasons I've explained, my final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr J to accept or reject my decision before 10 February 2026.

Sharon Kerrison  
**Ombudsman**