DRN-5706827

The complaint

Mr D complains Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited provided incorrect and contradictory valuations of his stocks and shares Individual Savings Account (ISA).

What happened

In March 2024, Mr D and his Independent Financial Adviser (IFA) became aware of discrepancies in the valuations Aviva provided for his ISA. When Mr D complained, Aviva explained a system error had caused the inconsistencies. Their final response provided a brief explanation about what had gone wrong. They apologised and said they were taking action to fix the issue.

Mr D brought the complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service and one of our Investigators looked into things. Our Investigator thought Aviva had not taken into account the impact their error had on Mr D as the system error meant Mr D felt confused and insecure about the value of his ISA. They thought Aviva should issue corrected client reports showing the true value of his ISA, and provide a correct client report showing Mr D's portfolio balance for 2024. And that Aviva should also provide a clear explanation where the sum of £36,285 received into his ISA in March and April 2023 came from. Our Investigator thought Aviva should pay Mr D £100 to reflect the level of confusion and insecurity he felt at the time.

Initially neither party responded to our Investigator. Aviva has since accepted the outcome our Investigator reached. Our Investigator then asked Mr D whether he accepted the proposed outcome. Because he did not respond, the complaint was passed to me to decide.

What I have 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.

It is not the role of the Financial Ombudsman Service to punish a business when they get things wrong. Instead, we can consider what went wrong, what Aviva did to put things right and whether there was any impact on Mr D. I will consider whether Aviva treated Mr D fairly and if their communications were clear and not misleading. My decision will focus on what I believe is at the crux of the complaint – that is; the valuations Mr D obtained from Aviva's platform were different from the client reports Aviva provided to his IFA.

I understand Mr D may be disappointed, but for very much the same reasons as our Investigator, I have decided Aviva should pay Mr D £100 to resolve the complaint. They should also send Mr D the corrected client reports and supply him with statements showing the correct valuations for his investment for the years to October 2022 and October 2023. Aviva should also explain clearly why the error occurred and confirm to Mr D that this issue has been fixed. They should also provide an explanation of the Bed & ISA transactions that took place in March and April 2023. I believe this will give Mr D comfort that the valuations and client reports will provide consistent information. I will now explain why this is a reasonable outcome to resolve the complaint.

Mr D provided a screenshot from Aviva's platform showing the valuation of his ISA on 29 February 2024. He also provided an Aviva client report dated 28 February 2024 that had been produced by his IFA from Aviva. The two documents have fund values calculated on different days so there is likely to be a variation in value. In this case, it seems to me that the biggest concern for Mr D is the difference between the cash balance recorded in the two valuations - £6.70 and £19,852.53, respectively.

As a result of the closure of one of Mr D's funds closing, Aviva returned the sum of £19,845.83 to his ISA cash account in mid-October 2021. Aviva accepts that because of a known system error the value of Mr D's ISA (including cash) is correctly recorded within their platform, but is double counted in any client report obtained by an IFA. This is what happened in this case.

Aviva apologised for this error and on 8 April 2024 they emailed the corrected client reports for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 to Mr D's IFA. It is possible that Mr D's IFA did not receive the email as there is a slight difference in the email address Aviva used. Regardless of this, I have decided it would have been reasonable for Aviva to have sent a copy of these client reports to Mr D, as this may have given him comfort that the valuations on the platform were the correct ones. Aviva should now send a copy of the corrected client reports to Mr D by post.

Aviva say they have now fixed the system error that caused the inconsistencies in valuations. Aviva's apology for the system error doesn't take into account the short-term impact of their failure to tell Mr D plainly and simply what was happening with his investments and the upset caused to him. It would have helped Mr D understand what had happened if Aviva had made it clear the system error caused the client reports provided to IFA's included the double counting of the £19,845.83, I have referred to earlier in my decision. Aviva accept they should have done this earlier than they did. Therefore, I have decided Aviva should pay Mr D £100 to reflect the level of confusion and insecurity he felt at the time.

I understand Mr D is upset about the difference in the valuations he and his IFA received, and that this would have caused some confusion when he met with his IFA. However, I have not seen anything to persuade me Aviva's error caused him a financial loss.

In respect of the corrected client reports Aviva emailed to Mr D's IFA, I have seen that the 2022/2023 client report refers to "Bed and ISA" investments made in March and April 2023. I am mindful that Mr D may not have seen the corrected statement, but I am persuaded the entries reflect an internal transfer of funds during this period. Regardless of this, Aviva should provide Mr D with written confirmation that this is the case as this may help his understanding of what happened at this time.

My final decision

For the reasons above, I decided to uphold Mr D's complaint. To resolve the complaint, Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited should:

- Pay Mr D £100 to reflect the confusion and insecurity he felt because of the system error;
- Send Mr D copies of the corrected client reports for 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024;
- Provide Mr D with a clear and simple explanation for the Bed & ISA transactions from 2023; and,
- Confirm to Mr D the system error has now been fixed and provide a clear explanation why the payment of £19,845.83 had been duplicated.

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

Paul Lawton
Ombudsman