

The complaint

Mr Y complains that Wise Payments Limited refused to make chargeback requests in respect of three payments for purchases on eBay.

What happened

In August 2024 Mr Y bought three appliances from Dyson's eBay store – two hair stylers for £299.99 each and a vacuum cleaner for £429.99. He made payment through Wise, a money transfer platform, using three different payment cards.

Mr Y says he was not happy with the goods he had bought, and that he returned them under the seller's 30-day return policy.

In each case eBay sent Mr Y a confirmation email saying that the goods had been returned and that it had issued a refund. In each case, the email said that Mr Y should receive the refund within 3-5 working days.

The refunds were not credited to Mr Y's account. He contacted the seller and eBay, but was told he should contact his bank. Initially, Wise identified two refunds which Mr Y had received from eBay at around the same time, each for £200.00. They had not been made with the same cards, however, and Mr Y maintained that no refunds had been received.

Wise said that it would not raise chargeback requests in respect of the purchases. Even though eBay had said it was processing refunds, Wise did not consider that chargeback requests were likely to be successful.

Mr Y referred the matter to this service, where one of our investigators considered what had happened. She took the view that chargeback requests should have been made and that, since the seller had agreed to refunds but they had not been received, it was likely they would have been successful. She therefore recommended that Wise pay the refunds, together with interest, and pay Mr Y a further £75 in recognition of the inconvenience to which he had been put.

Wise did not accept the investigator's assessment and asked that an ombudsman review the complaint.

I did that and, because I was likely to reach a different outcome from that reached by the investigator, I issued a provisional decision, in which I said:

As the investigator noted, there is no legal or regulator duty on a financial business to make a chargeback request, although we generally take the view that it should do so where there is a reasonable prospect of success. However, my overriding obligation when determining a complaint is to reach a decision which, in my opinion, I fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

I should also comment that this service is not bound by the same rules of evidence as a court would be. We can, for example, agree to keep evidence confidential where it is

appropriate to do so. Wise has provided some information and asked that it not be disclosed to Mr Y; I agree that its request was reasonable.

I can see that eBay said it had processed refund requests and that Mr Y should expect to receive refunds within a few days of receiving the refund confirmations. And, whilst he did receive two refunds for the same amounts at around the same time, I am satisfied he has not received refunds in respect of the payments which are the subject of this dispute. I think it likely that the seller and eBay decided after the refund emails had been sent that Mr Y was not, after all, entitled to refunds.

Had Wise made chargeback requests, therefore, I think it likely that they would have been defended, and that the seller would have provided more information about its reasons for deciding to stop the refunds.

Having had some experience of chargeback requests in similar situations, I can see why Wise took the view, therefore, that they were likely to be successfully defended here. And, taking all the circumstances into account, I believe that Wise's decision not to make chargeback requests was a reasonable one.

Mr Y did not accept my provisional decision. He said, in summary:

- It was unfair that he had returned the goods but had not received the refunds promised.
- The provisional decision speculated that eBay may have reversed the refund, but there was no evidence to support that finding.
- There was a reasonable basis for believing a chargeback would have been successful.
- If chargebacks had been attempted but had been unsuccessful, he would have accepted the outcome.
- It was not fair that Wise had been given the opportunity to submit evidence in confidence, but he had not.

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, however, I have not changed my view about how this complaint should be resolved.

I acknowledge that it would be unfair if a customer were to return goods in line with a seller's returns policy and not receive a refund. But, whilst I made a finding that no refunds had been made, I did not make any finding about the return of the goods. My provisional conclusion was that Wise had acted reasonably in not making a chargeback claim. That does not affect Mr Y's ability to make a claim against eBay or the seller.

I do not agree with Mr Y that a chargeback was likely to be successful. Both the seller and eBay had referred him to Wise when he sought refunds. Had they been satisfied that Mr Y was entitled to refunds, they would have processed them; there was no reason to involve Wise unless they had decided that Mr Y was not in fact due a refund. In my view, therefore, there was good reason to believe that a chargeback request would have been defended.

This service is not bound by the same rules of evidence as a court would be. It can, for example, admit evidence which would not be admissible in court and, as I explained in my provisional decision, accept evidence in confidence. Mr Y says that he should be able to provide evidence in confidence in the same way as Wise. It is for the ombudsman to decide

whether to accept evidence in confidence. For the avoidance of any doubt, however, the rule allowing an ombudsman to do so applies to evidence submitted by either party (and indeed by third parties). I am satisfied that Mr Y had an opportunity to submit any evidence on which he wished to rely and, if necessary, to ask that it not be disclosed to Wise.

I stress that my decision here concerns Wise's treatment of Mr Y and its handling of his request that it make chargeback claims. I make no finding on his claim for refunds from the seller or eBay, and this decision will not affect his rights to take further action against either of them, should he wish to do so.

I believe however that Wise's decision not to pursue a chargeback was reasonable in the circumstances.

My final decision

For these reasons, my final decision is that I do not uphold Mr Y's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr Y to accept or reject my decision before 27 August 2025.

Mike Ingram
Ombudsman