

The complaint

Mrs G complains that Barclays Bank UK plc trading as Barclaycard ('Barclaycard') unfairly reduced her credit card limit. She wants an apology and her credit limit to be restored.

What happened

Mrs G complained to Barclaycard about her significant credit limit reductions in November 2024 and December 2024. Barclaycard responded that they'd acted in line with their terms and conditions following information from the Credit Reference Agencies. An apology was provided for aspects of Barclaycard's customer service.

Unhappy, Mrs G referred her complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service, saying she'd recently received a text from Barclaycard about a mistake they'd made in relation to her credit file. Mrs G indicated she couldn't see anything on her credit file that would motivate Barclaycard to reduce her credit limit and noted she had been able to obtain a new credit card with another lender.

Our investigator obtained information from Barclaycard but didn't think they'd acted unfairly. He didn't recommend Mrs G's complaint be upheld.

Mrs G felt her concerns hadn't been addressed and she sought an ombudsman's decision. As part of this, Mrs G requested until 12 September 2025 to provide further comments and evidence. As that time has now passed, I am able to issue my 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've taken into account any relevant law and regulations, the regulator's rules, guidance and standards, codes of practice and (where appropriate) what is considered to have been good industry practice at the relevant time.

Having done so I have decided not to uphold Mrs G's complaint, as I don't think she's been treated unfairly by Barclaycard in these circumstances. I'll explain why.

The role of the Financial Ombudsman Service is to resolve individual complaints based on what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of each case. So it is not for this service to interfere with a firm's processes, systems or controls. Those are considerations for the Financial Conduct Authority ('FCA'), as the regulator.

Mrs G is understandably concerned that her credit limit was drastically reduced when she can't see an obvious reason for this. She's been able to get a new credit card elsewhere. I anticipate Barclaycard's recent notification about an accidental search on her credit file won't have bolstered her confidence that errors weren't made here.

In these circumstances I'd expect Barclaycard to provide Mrs G with the main reason for their decision and undertake a manual review.

Barclaycard's letters in November 2024 and December 2024 gave generic reasons for the decrease in credit limit. I think a more helpful reason was provided in Barclaycard's letter of 7 January 2025. I've also seen evidence that a person at Barclaycard reviewed the reason for the reduction in credit limit and confirmed there'd been no error in Barclaycard's process.

I am sorry that I can't provide Mrs G with the exact reason why her credit limit was reduced but I hope it offers her some reassurance that I've reviewed this as part of my investigation, and I don't think Barclaycard have treated her unfairly. This means I won't be asking Barclaycard to take any further action on this occasion.

Barclaycard said Mrs G could ask them for an increased credit limit six months after the decrease, so this is something Mrs G can now pursue. This will involve a fresh consideration of Mrs G's circumstances and is not something I could look to influence, given this is a business decision for Barclaycard to take.

Mrs G's referred to her excellent credit score but it may be helpful to know that this is a tool for individuals to gain a picture of their financial standing and not typically used by lenders. Barclaycard's decision in relation to any credit limit increase will likely depend on their own lending criteria, scoring methods and appetite for risk.

My final decision

For the reasons I've outlined, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs G to accept or reject my decision before 14 October 2025.

Clare Burgess-Cade
Ombudsman