

## **The complaint**

Mr D complains about Nationwide Building Society (“Nationwide”) for applying international currency fees to his account without adequate warning. He wants Nationwide to refund the charges.

## **What happened**

Mr D held a FlexDirect account with Nationwide.

In March 2025, whilst abroad, Mr D wanted to make a large payment, amounting to around £37,000.

He used his FlexDirect card to make an initial payment of around £10,000 and then checked his online account. As he did not see a charge applied immediately, he proceeded with the remainder of the payment.

Charges were then applied to his account later that day totalling £1134.30, which was 2.99% of the spend.

Mr D complained to Nationwide. He felt that any charges should have shown more quickly, or more should otherwise have been done to alert him to the charges he was incurring. He also felt that the second transaction ought not to have been allowed without further verification.

Nationwide responded to his complaint in March 2025. It rejected his complaint and pointed to the account terms which he had accepted when opening the account.

Mr D was not happy and contacted us.

One of our investigators looked into this matter and did not recommend that the complaint be upheld. They considered that the account information was clear about charges, and the charges were added to the account without delay. They did not consider that Nationwide needed to stop the transaction when it was above £25,000.

Mr D did not accept that view and asked for an ombudsman 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 appreciate why Mr D is upset at the charges, as they amounted to a significant sum, but I agree with my colleague and do not find that they were unfairly charged.

Mr D accepted the terms of the account when opening the account and he has acknowledged that information relating to account terms is sent to him.

He also receives monthly statements which make clear that transactions in foreign

currencies incur transaction charges of 2.99% of the sum charged.

This is not unusual, and it would be rare for a bank or building society to allow transactions in other currencies with no charges at all.

The amount that was charged was in line with that calculation (2.99% of the transaction) and so I think that Nationwide was open and clear about what charges would apply, and I cannot see what more they could have done to alert Mr D of the level of charges on foreign transactions before he carried out those transactions.

I understand that Mr D thinks that Nationwide ought to have stopped the payment when it exceeded £25,000 but I do not see that it was required in every instance. Halting payments is usually done by automated systems when the transaction is high risk of fraud. Mr D has not suggested that he was defrauded in this transaction, and it appears he had every intention of making the payment. Stopping the payment would only have hindered him from exercising his control of his money in this instance.

I therefore agree with my colleague's view, and I do not uphold Mr D's complaint. I do not ask Nationwide Building Society to do anything further.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons given above I do not uphold Mr D's complaint, and I do not ask Nationwide Building Society to do anything further.

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

Laura Garvin-Smith  
**Ombudsman**