

## **The complaint**

Mr F is unhappy that Nationwide Building Society can't clearly explain interest charges that have been applied to his account.

## **What happened**

On 18 September 2024, Mr F took a cash withdrawal from his Nationwide credit card account. When Mr F received his account statement for September, he saw that £0.42 interest had been applied to his account in relation to the cash withdrawal amount. And on the November and December statements he saw that they included cash withdrawal interest of £1.47 and £0.02 respectively.

Mr F questioned Nationwide about how interest had been calculated in regard to the cash withdrawal, but he didn't get a clear answer. Mr F wasn't happy about this, so he raised a complaint.

Nationwide responded to Mr F and explained that they were satisfied that the interest applied to his account had been calculated correctly but said that they couldn't provide a detailed explanation of how it had been cancelled, as Mr F was requesting. Mr F wasn't satisfied with Nationwide's response, so he referred his complaint to this service.

One of our investigators looked at this complaint. But they didn't feel that Nationwide had acted unfairly towards Mr F in how they'd administered his account and so didn't uphold the complaint. Mr F remained dissatisfied, so the matter was escalated to an ombudsman for a final 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 issued a provisional decision on this complaint on 1 September 2025 as follows:

*I'll be provisionally upholding this complaint in Mr F's favour, because I feel that if Nationwide are charging interest to an account, they should fairly and reasonably be expected to clearly explain that interest at an account holder's request. In this instance, Nationwide haven't done this. However, I won't be instructing Nationwide to pay any compensation to Mr F for what has happened here, because I don't feel that there has been any notable impact on Mr F such that any form of compensation is fairly merited.*

*In consideration of my position here, it's important to note that this service isn't a regulatory body or a Court of law and doesn't operate as such. This means that it isn't the role of this service to 'punish' or 'fine' a business if it gets things wrong. Instead, this service is an informal dispute resolution service with a remit focussed on fairness of outcome, in consideration of the impact of events on the complainant party.*

*In this instance, the total amount of interest under consideration here - £1.91 – is relatively*

*small. Furthermore, Mr F isn't disputing that interest should be charged on the cash withdrawal he made but instead complains that he can't understand how Nationwide calculated the interest. This means that it's the amount of interest charged, and not the fact that interest is charged, that Mr D disputes. As such, if Nationwide did make an error here, in the amount of interest that they charged, the financial impact of that error would most likely be minimal, potentially just a few pence.*

*Mr F may point to the trouble and inconvenience he's incurred bringing his complaint about the matter to Nationwide and then to this service. But this service doesn't consider any frustration or upset a complainant incurs in bringing a complaint – we only consider the impact of the events being complained about. This is as per the rules by which this service must abide, which can be found in the Dispute Resolution ("DISP") section of the Financial Conduct Authority ("FCA") Handbook, and which include that matters of complaint handling lie outside the remit and authority of this service.*

*However, I agree with Mr F's general complaint that a credit provider should be able to clearly explain the interest and charges applied to an account. Ultimately, Nationwide have charged the interest and so they should be able to explain it, which they haven't. And I feel that Nationwide's statement to Mr F – that Nationwide can't explain the interest calculation, but that Mr F might want to engage with a Financial Advisor who might be able to explain the interest calculation – is both unreasonable and inappropriate.*

*If the amount under consideration here had been larger, such that there had been a more significant impact on Mr F, then I would potentially have instructed Nationwide to have paid compensation for not clearly explaining the interest in question. But, to reiterate, given that the remit of this service is focussed on impact incurred and given that I don't feel that Mr F has incurred any tangible impact here, because the monetary amount in question is so small, I don't feel that any compensation is fairly merited in this instance.*

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Mr F responded to my complaint and asked whether there was a regulatory obligation for a financial institution such as Nationwide to provide an interest calculation upon request. Given that this service is not a regulatory body, I don't feel that I'm best placed to answer Mr F's question in this regard, and as such I can only refer Mr F to the relevant regulator (which I believe may be the Financial Conduct Authority ("FCA")) who I feel would be better placed to assist him. Similarly, as this service isn't a regulatory body, we do not have the authority to instruct a business to amend or clarify their terms and conditions as Mr F suggests.

As an informal, impartial dispute resolution service, we possess a remit based on fairness of outcome. This is why my provisional decision included my opinion that Nationwide should be fairly and reasonably expected to explain interest at an account holders request. However, it must be reiterated that my statement in this regard is based purely on what I consider to be fair and reasonable, and isn't in any way a statement about regulatory or legal obligations.

Notably, Mr F did not object to my provisional decision, and Nationwide did not provide a response to it. As such, I see no reason not to issue a final decision here whereby I uphold this complaint in Mr F's favour on the basis described above, wherein no further action from Nationwide is instructed. I therefore confirm that my final decision is that I do uphold this complaint on that basis accordingly.

### **Putting things right**

No further action is instructed of Nationwide at this time.

**My final decision**

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint against Nationwide Building Society on the basis explained above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr F to accept or reject my decision before 21 October 2025.

Paul Cooper  
**Ombudsman**