

## The complaint

Mr C complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC unfairly defaulted his credit card account and recorded incorrect balances with credit reference agencies (CRAs).

## What happened

Mr C held a credit card account with Barclays. The account was taken out in October 2023.

Over 2024 and 2025, Mr C struggled with his repayments, resulting ultimately, in Barclays reporting a default against his credit file in June 2025.

Unhappy with Barclays's actions, Mr C complained. He said he received no notification of the arrears or potential default and feels it unfair of Barclays to have registered it in the circumstances. He also said that the balances Barclays recorded with CRAs were incorrect. He wants not only the balances correcting but feels the default should be removed.

Barclays responded. In respect of the default registration, they said Mr C's account was in arrears as of December 2024, and he paid less than required in January 2025. He then failed to make any payments in February, March, April or May 2025. Barclays said they notified Mr C of these arrears and sent him a Notice of Default in April 2025 setting out the consequences of Mr C failing to pay the full arrears by 22 May 2025. This included, amongst other things, the potential reporting a default with CRAs; passing the debt to a debt collection agency or selling it to a debt purchaser. They said Mr C did not pay the arrears by the date due, so they were satisfied they correctly defaulted his account in June.

In respect of the balances they reported to CRAs, Barclays that they said they update the three main CRAs (Experian, Equifax and TransUnion) once a month, and the balance reported would generally show the following month, once the information was received and updated by the CRAs. They explained that if Mr C was accessing his credit file information from a company other than one of the main three, it may take longer to show, as they generally collect their information second hand from the main three companies. But they were satisfied the information they had provided CRAs was correct. But Mr C remained unhappy, so he brought his complaint to our service.

An investigator considered Mr C's complaint, but ultimately, didn't recommend it be upheld. In summary, he thought it wasn't unreasonable for Barclays to have defaulted Mr C's account given the level of arrears that had built, and he was satisfied that the appropriate notices had been sent. In respect of the reporting of arrears, he explained that balances can sometimes take a while to update, and that this can be further delayed depending on which credit file information provider Mr C might be using to access the information; but ultimately, he hadn't seen sufficient evidence to show any errors in the way Barclays were reporting information to CRAs.

But Mr C remained unhappy. So, as the parties remain in disagreement, the case was passed to me to decide.

## 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.

While I know this will come as a disappointment to Mr C, I agree with the investigator here for broadly the same reasons.

Looking first at the default that was registered, the guidance for businesses on the reporting of arrears is set out in the Information Commissioner's Office's "*Principles for the Reporting of Arrears, Arrangements and Defaults at Credit Reference Agencies*" report.

Section 4 is titled "*If you fall into arrears on your account, or you do not keep to the revised terms of an arrangement, a default may be recorded to show that the relationship has broken down*". This section explains that accounts will normally default when a customer is between three and six months in arrears.

The December 2024 statement provided by Barclays, shows that in order for Mr C to meet his minimum repayment - which included some existing arrears that had already built - that he needed to pay at least £94.12 by 17 January 2025. However, Mr C only paid £60 in January, so I'm satisfied that by January 2025, given the existing arrears that had already built, Mr C had already been in arrears for two consecutive statement months.

Following the insufficient payment made by Mr C in January, I can see that no payments were made by Mr C for the months of February, March, or April. So, at the point Barclays issued Mr C with a Notice of Default in April 2025, requiring him to pay the full arrears of £109.12 by 22 May 2025, I'm satisfied that Mr C's account was already more than four months behind, and that the arrears had built to a level where it was appropriate for Barclays to now consider defaulting his account. The default notice issued set out clearly when the arrears needed to be paid by, so as to avoid a default, but again, no payment was made by this date. So, I'm satisfied that it was reasonable for Barclays to proceed in reporting Mr C's account as in default on 4 June 2025, given how his account had been managed.

Mr C has argued that he paid £134.12 to clear the arrears on the same date the default was recorded with CRAs (4 June 2025). So, he feels it was therefore unfair of Barclays to report the default at that stage. But the default notice was clear, that the amount due, needed to be paid by 22 May 2025, not 4 June, so as to avoid a default. So, while I appreciate Mr C may be unhappy with this, the point raised here doesn't alter my finding, that it wasn't unreasonable for Barclays to default Mr C's account when they did.

Turning next to the balances Barclays recorded on Mr C's credit file, as the investigator has rightly explained (and as has Barclays), there is generally a lag in the information that businesses report to CRAs in respect of a customer's balance and that information then pulling through onto a customer's credit file, this is not unusual. Barclays have explained that they report information just once a month to CRAs.

Mr C has argued that the balance recorded at the beginning of June; late in June; in July and in August 2025, of £620; £486.50; £386.50, and £386.50 were incorrect.

But having reviewed Mr C's statements, I can see that the statement dated 23 June 2025, shows that Mr C's balance was £486.50; the statement dated 23 July 2025 showed a balance of £386.50; and the August statement also showed a balance of £386.50. And while I haven't seen the May statement, the June statement shows that Mr C's previous balance was £620.62. So, while I haven't seen a detailed credit report, from the information Mr C has himself provided, it would appear there were no issues with the balances Barclays recorded,

as the statements seem to reflect the balances Mr C has himself quoted. So, I'm happy that Barclays have recorded correct entries in that regard.

Turning to Mr C's final point. He has said that he received no correspondence in respect of the arrears on his account, or the subsequent default notice.

I can see from the information Mr C has sent to our service in respect of his complaint, that he has provided us with a different address to the address the correspondence was being sent to by Barclays. So, to understand why a different address had been noted, we emailed both Mr C and Barclays. This was to establish from Mr C why the address didn't match the address Barclays held, and to ask Barclays whether they had received any notification of an address change.

Barclays confirmed that they only address change request they received was back in 2023, which they updated on their systems, and have been sending correspondence to since. They said they've received no further address change requests since then. But Mr C failed to provide any response to our queries by the date due.

So, on balance, from the information provided, it would seem the current address Mr C has provided our service is his business address, and I have nothing to suggest that Mr C had updated his address with Barclays at any point since December 2023. So, I'm satisfied the appropriate arrears notices and subsequent notice of default were sent to the address Mr C provided Barclays.

While I appreciate this may come as a disappointment to Mr C, I'm satisfied Mr C was provided with sufficient notice of the potential consequences of not paying his account. And based on how his account was managed, I'm satisfied that Barclays have recorded the correct arrears information against Mr C's credit file, and that it wasn't unreasonable for them to record this information, including the default, given the circumstances.

So, for these reasons, I won't be asking Barclays to do anything further here.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I do not uphold Mr C's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 5 December 2025.

Brad McIlquham  
**Ombudsman**