

The complaint

Mr C complains J.P. Morgan Europe Limited trading as Chase unfairly refused to allow him to open an account.

What happened

The facts of the complaint are well known to both parties, so I will only provide a summary of the key points.

Mr C held a Chase current account which he closed on 13 October 2023. Mr C says at the time he closed the account he was informed if he updated his email address and mobile number, he would be able to reopen an account again the future.

In February 2025 Mr C tried to open a new account with Chase, but the application was declined as Chase explained it could not onboard customers who had previously left them. Mr C raised his concerns about this decision with Chase, and it explained no error had been made and it had made this decision in line with its policy.

Mr C contacted Chase multiple times in the following weeks as he remained unhappy with its decision to not offer him a new account. Mr C raised a formal complaint regarding his treatment by Chase, and it reviewed his concerns. On 28 March 2025 Chase issued a final response letter, explaining that it wouldn't offer Mr C a new account, and it had made it clear to Mr C when he closed his account that he would be unable to open another one.

Chase acknowledged that the service Mr C received whilst he was in touch regarding his application had fallen short at times, and it offered Mr C £100 in recognition of the impact of this.

Mr C remained unhappy and referred his complaint to this service. An Investigator reviewed Mr C's complaint and gathered the relevant information. In summary, they made the following findings:

- Chase is under no obligation to offer a new account to a customer if it does not wish to do so. This is a commercial decision it is able to make.
- The terms and conditions of the account Mr C did hold state that would not be able to re-join if he closed his account.
- Mr C would've been told he could not open an account again when he closed his account – Chase has provided screenshots to support this.
- There isn't evidence of the phone call between Mr C and a Chase employee who told him he could reopen the account if he changed his number and email address.
- The £100 offer for the service issues Mr C experienced is reasonable.

Mr C disagreed with this review and maintained he had been given incorrect information. Mr C also said Chase hadn't paid him the £100 as agreed. The Investigator confirmed Chase had offered £100 in its final response letter – and any follow up correspondence didn't include additional compensation. Mr C remained unhappy and asked for an ombudsman to review his complaint.

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.

Firstly, I'm aware that I've only summarised Mr C's complaint points. No discourtesy is intended by this. Our rules allow me to take this approach. It simply reflects the informal nature of our service as a free alternative to the courts. I can assure Mr C I have carefully considered his points.

The crux of Mr C's complaint is that he is unable to open another account with Chase following his decision to close his account in 2023. I realise this has come as a disappointment to Mr C and he feels this decision is unfair. However, based on the available evidence I think Chase has acted reasonably. I'll explain why.

Chase has explained its internal onboarding processes mean once a customer closes an account, they are unable to open an account again in the future. This is a business issue for Chase – and it is entitled to make such decisions based on its commercial and operational objectives. Chase is under no obligation to review or change this process in Mr C's case.

Mr C says this factor wasn't made clear to him when he closed the account. The account term and conditions specify that an account holder is unable to open an account again after one is closed. Chase has also provided screenshots which it says Mr C would've seen when he went through the closure process. So I am satisfied it took sufficient steps to explain the impact Mr C's decision to close his account would have.

A key issue for Mr C is that he was informed by a Chase representative that if he amended his phone number and email address before he closed the account, he would be able to open one again in the future. Chase hasn't been able to locate a phone call in which Mr C was told this information. I must highlight that even if such a conversation did take place – I wouldn't direct Chase to allow Mr C to open an account with it. Ultimately Chase is able to decide which customers onboard, and it is not the role of this service to direct businesses to amend their business processes.

I think it's important to highlight that it is the role of the Financial Ombudsman Service to resolve individual complaints and to award redress where appropriate. We do not perform the role of the industry regulator, and it is not our role to comment on how businesses conduct their operations. That's the role of the regulator, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). So I've thought about Mr C's comments in relation to his complaint, and I can't comment on Chase's processes in the level of detail he has requested.

It's not in dispute that the service Mr C received whilst he was in touch with Chase fell below reasonable standards. Mr C had multiple phone calls, and his expectations were always managed carefully. Chase has offered Mr C £100 in recognition of these shortcomings. Based on my review of the timeline of events and Mr C's interactions with Chase, I consider this to be a fair and reasonable offer.

I know my answer will be disappointing to Mr C, who strongly believes he was treated poorly by Chase. I can understand why Mr C feels this way, but having looked at all the evidence, I'm satisfied Chase acted fairly. I hope that it helps Mr C to know that someone impartial and independent has looked into his concerns.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 5 March 2026.

Chandni Green
Ombudsman