

## **The complaint**

Mr L complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC trading as Tesco Bank registered a default marker on his credit file.

## **What happened**

Mr L holds a credit card account with Tesco.

In February 2024 the account fell into arrears. Tesco sent several letters to Mr L but received no response. No payments were received to clear the arrears and in July 2024 the account was defaulted and terminated.

Mr L complained to Tesco. He said that on 5 May 2024 he'd been held by the police and bailed the following day with the condition that he didn't return to his property for three months. During this time Tesco sent letters to his property advising that his account would be defaulted and a default registered on his credit file. Mr L said he only received the letters when he was allowed back to his property, by which time the account had been defaulted and passed to a debt recovery company. Mr L asked Tesco to remove the default marker from his credit file because he hadn't received the letters and Tesco hadn't communicated with him by some other means such as email or text.

Tesco didn't uphold the complaint. In its final response it said the account had been defaulted and terminated in one with the terms and conditions of the account and that the default had been correctly reported to the credit reference agencies.

Mr L remained unhappy and brought his complaint to this service.

Our investigator didn't uphold the complaint. They said that the arrears letters had been sent from February 2024 which was three months before Mr L was prevented from returning to his property. They also said that Tesco had correctly sent the default notice by post to Mr L's address.

Mr L didn't agree so I've been asked to review the 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.

I know it will disappoint Mr L, but I agree with the investigator's opinion. I'll explain why.

I've reviewed the history of the account. I can see that Mr L opened the account in October 2022 and completed a money transfer for £3,500 on 10 November 2022. The payment history shows that Mr L missed some payments to the account in 2023. The last payment made to the account prior to the default was on 9 February 2024.

Tesco sent several letters to Mr L between February 2024 and July 2024. I appreciate that Mr L could not return to his property from May 2024 for a period of three months. However,

several letters about the arrears on the account were sent to Mr L prior to May 2024. So I'm satisfied that Mr L was made aware of the arrears on the account and of the requirement to contact Tesco and make arrangements to bring the account up to date around three months prior to the point at which he was unable to return to his property. There's nothing to suggest that Mr L got in touch with Tesco between February – May 2024 to arrange a payment plan.

Mr L has explained that as soon as he discovered that the account had been passed to a debt collection company he contacted them and made a payment arrangement. He doesn't think it's fair that the default has been registered on his credit file.

I've reviewed the default notice, and I can see that it was sent to Mr L by post at his registered address. There's nothing to suggest that Mr L contacted Tesco to advise them that he wasn't able to return to his address and/or a request to send correspondence to a different address. So I can't say that Tesco has made an error by sending the default notice to Mr L at his property.

Mr L has said that Tesco should have sent him an email or a text. He's also said that he's had some issues with email delivery from Tesco. I've taken account of what Mr L has said but I don't think Tesco made an error or acted unreasonably by sending letters by post. As I've said above, I'm satisfied that Tesco sent letters to Mr L about the arrears around three months prior to the point at which he's said he wasn't able to return to his property. I'm satisfied that Mr L had ample opportunity to contact Tesco about the account.

I understand that Mr L wants the default marker removed from his credit file because of the impact it is having. Tesco – like all lenders – is obliged to report accurate information to the credit reference agencies. This service can only ask a lender to amend a credit file if there has been an error. In Mr L's case, I haven't seen anything to suggest that the default wasn't correctly reported.

Taking everything into account, and for the reasons I've explained above, I'm unable to uphold the complaint.

### **My final decision**

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

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr L to accept or reject my decision before 23 March 2026.

Emma Davy  
**Ombudsman**