

## **The complaint**

Mrs B complains about the service she received from Bank of Ireland (UK) Plc (BOI) after she made a transfer to her account.

## **What happened**

Mrs B opened a savings account with BOI. Ahead of making a large deposit into the account, Mrs B made two smaller payments which were received into the account without issue.

Following this, Mrs B made a £1million CHAPS transfer to her BOI account from her joint account elsewhere. When the funds left the joint account, they weren't received into her BOI account. The same happened with a transfer for the same amount, made from the joint account to a separate account Mr B had opened with BOI at the same time.

Mr B, whilst dealing with the same issue with his account and on behalf of Mrs B, called BOI a number of times over the course of a week, as the funds still hadn't reached Mrs B's (or his) BOI account. During the various calls Mr B had with BOI, they couldn't confirm they'd received the funds, leaving Mrs B (and Mr B) very concerned that she'd either been scammed, or the money was missing and there had been an error in the transfer, and either way, that she was facing a significant financial loss. It took around a week after the funds left the joint account for them to be credited into Mrs B's BOI account.

BOI said additional checks were needed on larger transactions, but there had been a coding error which meant this took longer than it should've. BOI recognised they'd given conflicting timescales of when the funds would be paid into Mrs B's account and communication had been poor. BOI backdated the interest to the day of the transfer to ensure there was no financial loss and offered Mr and Mrs B £200 compensation for what happened.

As Mrs B remained unhappy, she approached the Financial Ombudsman Service.

When the case came to this service, our investigator noted that the final response was addressed to both Mr and Mrs B because they both had the same issue at the same time. So the investigator said that effectively the £200 compensation offered by BOI was £100 each for Mr and Mrs B.

The investigator noted that whilst the transfer had come from a joint account, the BOI accounts were Mr and Mrs B's individual accounts, so she separated the complaints. And whilst she recognised that BOI had effectively already offered Mrs B £100 compensation (along with backdating interest), she didn't think this was enough for the distress and worry that Mrs B had been caused. So, she recommended BOI increase the compensation to a total of £250 for Mrs B.

BOI agreed, but Mrs B didn't. As an agreement couldn't be reached, the case was passed to me 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.

Firstly, whilst I note an identical issue happened to both Mr and Mrs B when transferring funds from their joint account, the receiving accounts and where the issues and poor service occurred were with BOI, and individual accounts. So, Mr and Mrs B are separate account holders and therefore separate eligible complainants, albeit the complaint is about the same identical issue. My consideration here is solely in relation to what happened to Mrs B, when transferring funds into her BOI account, and the appropriate amount of compensation for Mrs B. I've written to Mr B separately.

It isn't in dispute that BOI provided poor service and communication, and that's why they offered compensation originally (and backdated interest to ensure no financial loss), and later agreed with the investigator's recommendations to pay Mrs B a total of £250 compensation. As what happened isn't in dispute, I won't focus on, or repeat in detail, the full sequence of events. I don't mean this as a discourtesy to either party. Instead, it reflects the informal nature of this service and my role in it. But I'd like to reassure both parties that I've considered everything they've provided to this service when reaching my final decision.

I can understand why Mrs B is unhappy with what happened, and I recognise the distress this caused worrying about potentially having lost a significant amount of money (£2million in total including the separate transfer to Mr B), which she (and Mr B) thought was either caused by an error during the transfer, or that she'd been the victim of fraud. Each time Mr B called BOI (on Mrs B's behalf and when dealing with the same issue on his account), he was told Mrs B should check her account later or the next day, given conflicting and unclear timescales, and simply told the back-office team would look into it. And BOI couldn't provide reassurance that they'd actually received the funds either as they couldn't be located due to a coding error internally. Given the amount and the loss Mrs B thought she was facing, I can understand why she (and Mr B) wanted BOI to try to do more to locate the missing funds.

I recognise the impact the situation had on Mrs B, and whilst I appreciate it'll come as a disappointment to her, I agree a total of £250 compensation (along with the backdated interest already provided) as recommended by the investigator (and agreed to by BOI) is a fair amount in the circumstances. I also acknowledge Mrs B has equated that to a minimal hourly rate for the time she was left worrying about the missing funds, but when we look at awarding compensation, this isn't calculated on an hourly basis and instead is an overall sum. And having considered everything, I think £250 compensation is fair in the circumstance, so that's what I'll be directing BOI to pay Mrs B.

## **My final decision**

It's my final decision that I uphold this complaint and direct Bank of Ireland (UK) Plc to:

- Pay Mrs B a total of £250 compensation (including what has already been offered)

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs B to accept or reject my decision before 10 November 2025.

Callum Milne  
**Ombudsman**