

The complaint

Mr R complains about Conister Bank Limited. Mr R is unhappy with delays when he applied for an account with Conister.

What happened

Mr R applied for a fixed deposit account with Conister on 24 July 2025. Conister emailed Mr R that day to confirm it will be in touch in due course.

On 30 July 2025 Conister emailed Mr R to advise it had received his application, and it was being processed.

Mr R said he was concerned about the time it had already taken and Conister still hadn't opened the account. Mr R said he had funds which were ready to invest, and he didn't want to risk waiting a further unknown time for Conister to open his account.

So, later that day Mr R opened a different fixed deposit account with another provider who I'll refer to as 'B'.

Conister then emailed Mr R on 5 August 2025 and said it had reviewed his application, and it needed to see a valid form of ID such as a driving license to progress the application.

Mr R had already opened an account with B, so I understand he no longer needed the Conister account. However, Mr R said he was disappointed with the level of service from Conister, and he complained about the delay in opening an account for him.

Conister apologised for the delay in setting up Mr R's account and said due to a high volume of applications it was experiencing slight delays with processing applications. Conister said it sometimes needs to do Know Your Customer (KYC) checks such as asking for a form of ID. And Conister said it could continue with the application once it has seen some ID.

Mr R said it appears Conister upheld his complaint, but it wasn't entirely clear, and it only apologised for the delay without offering any compensation. Ultimately Mr R wasn't happy with the outcome from Conister and so referred the matter to our service.

Our investigator didn't uphold the complaint. He said Conister didn't make any promises about how long it would take to open an account, and the terms of the account didn't dictate a timeframe for how long it would take. So, he didn't think Conister had done something substantially wrong.

Mr R didn't agree with our investigator's findings. Mr R said a lack of timescales in the terms of the account is irrelevant and our service should consider what is reasonable in the circumstances.

So, Mr R asked for his complaint to be passed 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.

Having done so I've decided not to uphold this complaint. I'll explain why.

I may not mention or respond to every point raised by the parties in my decision, it's not because I failed to take them on board and think about them, but because I don't think I need to comment on those points to reach what I think is a fair and reasonable outcome.

Mr R said it took Conister 12 days to ask for valid ID following his application being made. He said he couldn't risk Conister taking another 12 days or more to process the application and open his account.

I understand Mr R's position on this. And I do think 12 days is slightly longer than I'd expect for a business to request further documents such as ID. Though I also think it's reasonable to consider how long it took in working days as this typically represents when a business is operating. And it was eight working days after the application was submitted that Conister asked to see a form of ID.

So, I think it's fair to consider the timeline as follows: Mr R submitted his application, four working days later Conister sent a holding email advising it had received his application and was processing it. Another four working days later Conister asked for a valid form of ID.

Objectively speaking I think I'd consider this to be a small delay rather than a substantial one. Though I appreciate Mr R had funds ready to invest and he wanted to invest them urgently into a savings account to avoid missing out on any interest.

Our service expects consumers to, where possible, mitigate their circumstances particularly when they receive poor service - or delays as in this case. And I can see Mr R did this and mitigated his concerns with how long Conister were taking by opting to open an account with B. And he did this after four working days from submitting his application to Conister.

So, I think it's fair to say even if Conister had been able to open an account for Mr R in five working days after his application was submitted, he would have already opened the alternative account with B by that point and so he'd no longer need the Conister account.

I can understand Mr R's frustration and disappointment with Conister. I understand Mr R's experience elsewhere has been that accounts are opened very quickly after an application is submitted. So, to wait six days for a holding email then another six days to be asked for ID would understandably be frustrating. But that doesn't mean I think Conister have done something wrong to the degree that I think monetary compensation is warranted.

I think Conister's explanation is reasonable regarding receiving a higher than usual volume of applications which resulted in some small processing delays.

And I think Conister's apology to Mr R is reasonable in the circumstances. I understand Mr R thinks some financial compensation should come with the apology to account for the time he spent submitting the application which he classes as wasted.

I do understand Mr R's position on this. But I don't think I can reasonably say Conister wasted Mr R's time. I think it's reasonable to consider, on the balance of probabilities, that Conister would likely have opened the account soon after a valid ID was submitted.

Instead of proceeding with the Conister application Mr R opted to open an account with B. I don't hold Conister responsible for that, I think it's fair to say it was Mr R's choice. As I've referenced earlier, I understand why Mr R made that choice, but that doesn't mean I think Conister should be held accountable for how Mr R chose to mitigate his circumstances.

I've looked at the difference in interest rates between B's fixed deposit account and Conister's. I understand the Conister account had a slightly higher interest rate by around 0.03%. I think the difference in the interest rate is negligible, and I don't think it would be reasonable to ask Conister to do anything further, nor do I hold it at fault for Mr R opting to open an account with B at a slightly lower interest rate.

Our service thinks an apology is reasonable for a one-off incident such as a short delay which caused minimal impact. And I think that fairly reflects the circumstances of this case. So, I won't require Conister to do anything further.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

I make no further award against Conister Bank Limited.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr R to accept or reject my decision before 2 January 2026.

Gordon Candlish
Ombudsman