

The complaint

Mr P is unhappy that NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY ('NatWest') made an error when issuing his fraud refund. He wants compensation to recognise the impact this had on him.

What happened

In May 2025, Mr P raised a fraud claim with NatWest which included a large number of transactions for various amounts. NatWest upheld the fraud claim and credited Mr P with £47,234.93 in Mid-June 2025. They contacted Mr P the following morning to apologise and explained that an error had been made in the calculation as the credit should have been for £16,948.61. So, they debited £30,286.32 from his savings account and directed him to complain.

Mr P complained to NatWest about the error. NatWest apologised and explained that the difference in the amounts was due to a keying error. They recognised that this would have a severe impact on Mr P and offered £200. Mr P remained unhappy as he had plans for the larger amount and he didn't think £200 was enough.

An investigator reviewed the complaint and explained that we wouldn't expect NatWest to leave him with funds that weren't rightfully his. They agreed that NatWest made an error but they recognised it and apologised to him quickly, so they thought £200 was a reasonable amount of compensation. Mr P disagreed as he didn't think it was close enough to the amount they removed. As such, the complaint has been 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.

As an impartial service, we're unable to fine or punish a business for an error that's been made. Our role is to consider whether an error has led to an impact and recommend compensation to recognise that impact.

It's clear that NatWest has accepted responsibility for the error that led to Mr P being credited with the incorrect amount. They explained that this was caused by a typo when manually entering the value of a disputed payment. When something like this happens, I'd expect to see it recognised and put right quickly.

I can see that NatWest got in touch with Mr P shortly after the incorrect credit had been issued. They apologised, explained what had gone wrong, and that they had to remove the incorrectly credited amount. So, I'm satisfied that the impact of the error was kept to a minimum and Mr P wasn't left to make plans and commitments with the money for a lengthy period.

I can appreciate that Mr P has been through a very difficult time, and this amount of money would have felt like something that would allow him to make a fresh start. But I can't say that he's entitled to money that was paid to him in error.

The error would have caused Mr P a great deal of disappointment and it would have mismanaged his expectations. He would have also had to go back into branch to bring the events up again when complaining. I appreciate that Mr P doesn't agree, but I think the £200 already paid recognises this impact. So, I don't think NatWest need to pay further compensation to put things right.

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 P to accept or reject my decision before 31 December 2025.

Chris Lowe
Ombudsman