

## The complaint

Ms G has complained about the way Monzo Bank Ltd ('Monzo') dealt with her claim for money back in relation to a purchase she made using her debit card.

## What happened

Ms G purchased a camera stand for £114, using her Monzo debit card, from a business I'll call 'A'. Ms G decided to return the item she received and get a refund. She's said she sent it back to A, however A did not provide a refund.

After not being able to resolve things with A, Ms G asked Monzo to help. Monzo raised a chargeback through the MasterCard scheme, as Ms G's debit card belonged to it. However, the chargeback was defended by A. It said that Ms G hadn't provided signed and trackable proof that the purchase had been returned, so no refund was due. Monzo asked Ms G to provide this, and she sent it further evidence, however Monzo didn't think it was enough for the chargeback to be successful, so didn't take things further. But it offered Ms G £55 to say sorry for the way it handled things.

Unhappy with Monzo's response, Ms G came to our service, and an investigator considered her complaint. Overall, he said that he didn't think Monzo had dealt with things unfairly, and considering the evidence Ms G had provided to Monzo when it was pursuing a chargeback for her –

- The message Ms G supplied from A setting out they were requesting a refund didn't include the order number for the camera stand. Whilst Ms G had argued this was A's error, he didn't think that would make a difference to the chargeback outcome.
- The tracking information she provided didn't include details of the items being returned.

Ms G didn't agree, she didn't think Monzo had handled things fairly and reasonably in line with the applicable rules and regulations, and -

- The mismatch in the order number on A's email was A's error not hers
- A's email included the correct amount (£114) for the camera stand, and her supporting evidence clearly linked to the purchase.
- The drop-off receipt and tracking records she'd provided were valid proof of return.
- The evidence she'd provided confirmed A had accepted the refund.
- Monzo didn't provide specific feedback or request clarification before closing the dispute
- She'd supplied all the relevant information promptly and that Monzo's processes were flawed and incomplete
- Monzo didn't act in her best interest, and didn't take reasonable steps to pursue a valid dispute on her behalf

Given Ms G didn't agree the complaint was progressed to the next stage of our process, an ombudsman's 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.

I'm aware I've summarised the events of the complaint to some degree. I don't intend any discourtesy by this – it just reflects the informal nature of our service. I'm required to decide matters quickly and with minimum formality. But I want to assure Ms G and Monzo that I've reviewed everything on file. And if I don't comment on something, it's not because I haven't considered it. It's because I've concentrated on what I think are the key issues. Our powers allow me to do this.

What I need to consider here is whether Monzo – as a provider of financial services – has acted fairly and reasonably in the way it handled Ms G's request for getting her money back. It's important to note that Monzo isn't the supplier of goods which this dispute centres around.

So, I've thought about the card protections that are available. In situations like this, Monzo can consider raising a chargeback.

### **Chargeback**

The chargeback process provides a way for a card issuer to ask for a payment to be refunded in certain circumstances. The chargeback process is subject to rules made by the relevant card scheme. It's not a guaranteed way of getting money back. Whilst it's good practice for a card issuer to attempt to chargeback where certain conditions are met and there's some prospect of success; there are grounds or dispute conditions set by the relevant card scheme that need to be considered. If these are not met, a chargeback is unlikely to succeed. And something going wrong with a merchant won't always lead to a successful claim.

Here Monzo did attempt a chargeback for Ms G when she went to them and asked for help, Monzo did so under the reason code 'credit not processed', looking at the MasterCard rules, I think this was the code that best fit in the circumstances.

Under the rules, once a chargeback has been submitted by Monzo, the rules allow a given period for A to reply to say whether it agrees or not. Here A replied and defended the chargeback. This could then lead to Monzo making further representations, if it considered A had raised a weak or invalid defence. The process then allows for further representations to be made if the parties still don't agree, and for the card scheme to ultimately decide if Ms G should get a refund or not.

This means that for me to conclude that Monzo did something wrong in Ms G's case, and should do something to put things right, I'd need to find that Monzo didn't make further representations when it should have. This could be, for example, because Monzo had the information A said Ms G needed to show. Also, I'd need to find that Ms G lost out as a result, for example, because it's likely the chargeback would have been successful, and she would have recovered her money (either in full or partially).

As I've set out, A replied to the chargeback with a defence and it said, *'the customer must provide signed and trackable proof of return of merchandise in order to receive the credit, no refund is due'*. Monzo forwarded that response to Ms G, which is what I would expect it to do.

Ms G then sent Monzo further evidence, but it didn't think the information showed what A's defence had asked for, so it didn't take things further. Ms G has said Monzo should have gone back to her and explained this and told her what she would need to provide. I agree Monzo's communication could have been better here, however I think the important question is even if it had of been better, would it have made a difference to the outcome of the chargeback.

To determine this, I've looked at all the evidence Ms G has provided, that was given at the time of the chargeback, and later to this service. After doing so, it's unlikely in my view (although I can't be sure) that MasterCard ultimately would have decided in her favour and returned the cost of the camera stand. I say this because I don't think the information Ms G has provided shows the camera stand order has been returned and received by A.

Looking at the messages from A Ms G has provided, one has an incorrect order number however includes the amount (£114) for the camera stand. It says a refund has been requested. The other says a refund is being processed and once processed an amount will be credited to her. However, in my opinion neither of these messages confirm that A has received the item.

Looking at the screenshot Ms G has provided of A's system; it contains the camera stand order number. And confirms the refund, and says, *'We will issue your refund within 14 days after we receive your return'*, further down there are details about a drop off date. There is also a box containing '?' next to *'return code'*. In my opinion the screenshot doesn't confirm if the item was received by A.

Looking at the evidence Ms G has provided concerning the tracking of the returned parcel. It shows several parcels were given to a delivery company on the same drop off date as mentioned in the screenshot of A's system. Ms G has highlighted one of the tracking numbers and provided screenshots of messages showing the parcel, with that tracking number, was delivered and a signature was received. The drop off date matches with the screenshot of A's system. However, the tracking information Ms G has provided doesn't include the order number of the camera stand, a return code or a description of what the package contains which links the tracking number back to the order of the camera stand. In my opinion MasterCard would have wanted to see this linking information to determine that A had received the item and therefore a refund was due.

So, looking at what happened in Ms G's case, yes, I agree Monzo could have communicated better with Ms G, but even if it had I don't think this would have made a difference to the outcome of the chargeback, and it would have been unsuccessful. So, overall, I don't think Monzo acted unfairly or unreasonably by not making further representations.

Monzo have offered Ms G £55 to say sorry for how it handled things. I think in the round that amount is fair, Monzo should pay to the extent the amount has not already been paid.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I think Monzo Bank Ltd have done enough to put things right and I don't uphold Ms G's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms G to accept or reject my decision before 13 February 2026.

Helen Boulton-Agg  
**Ombudsman**

