

The complaint

Mr G complains that Nationwide Building Society (Nationwide) won't release funds that remained in his account after it was closed.

What happened

Nationwide closed Mr G's account in 2024 following an internal review. In order to release the funds that remained in the account Nationwide requested evidence of Mr G's entitlement to them. Mr G provided an explanation as to where the payments had come from along with some documentation to support his claim. Nationwide later asked for one specific piece of evidence which Mr G says he's not able to provide - a copy of his employers full, unedited, bank statement. This was due to Mr G explaining some of the payments in question had been his wages, sent by his employer. Mr G's employer did provide a redacted bank statement to Nationwide, explaining they couldn't send it unedited due to it containing other parties' details – citing this would breach data protection laws.

Nationwide, being unsatisfied with what was provided, decided to continue to hold the funds until it received further evidence of Mr G's entitlement to them, including the requested unedited bank statement.

Mr G complained to Nationwide who didn't uphold his complaint. He later brought his complaint to our service where one of our investigators looked into it, who recommended it wasn't upheld. In summary they said that Nationwide was entitled to request the evidence that it had and also that it had a legitimate basis for not releasing the funds to Mr G.

Mr G disagreed. He's said that Nationwide's request for his employers' bank statement is excessive and not one that he can be in control of providing. Mr G has said his employers' refusal to provide this should not mean he is financially punished. He has also said he feels Nationwide have been provided enough evidence without this to show his entitlement to the funds and that their actions have left him feeling traumatised and affected relationships with his friends and family.

He asked for a final decision, so his complaint has now been passed to me for a 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 have decided not to uphold this complaint. I'll explain why.

Nationwide has strict legal and regulatory requirements it must meet whilst it provides accounts for its customers. Part of these require Nationwide to monitor its customers' accounts, and this sometimes means it may carry out a review, the result of which might mean that proof of a customer's entitlement to funds within the account are sought.

I understand Mr G feels that Nationwide's request for his employers' bank statement is

excessive, but it is generally for a financial institution to set its own risk criteria in relation to its legal and regulatory obligations. And whilst the payments in question may well be wages paid to Mr G as he has said, Nationwide is entitled to request verifiatory evidence of this. Whilst I understand that Mr G may not have direct control over whether his employer will submit an unredacted bank statement as Nationwide have requested, and doesn't believe it is needed in any case, his inability to provide this doesn't mean that Nationwide have to be satisfied by what has already been presented to it. I don't find that Nationwide have acted outside of its terms and conditions, or indeed unfairly, in this context by not releasing funds to Mr G and continuing to request his employers' unredacted bank statement.

Nationwide have confirmed to Mr G that, should an unredacted bank statement be submitted by his employer, it will be dealt with and handled in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which I find to be reasonable.

I'm sorry to hear that Nationwide's decision to not release the funds and continue to request further evidence has affected Mr G in the way he has said. But for the reasons I've given above, I don't find that Nationwide have acted unfairly in not being satisfied that the information and evidence supplied so far is sufficient for their legal and regulatory obligations or risk appetite. It follows that I don't find Nationwide have acted unfairly in not releasing the funds to Mr G. As I don't think Nationwide has done anything wrong, I see no basis for it to award any compensation to Mr G for any financial loss, distress, or inconvenience he may have suffered.

My final decision

For the reasons above, I have decided not to uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr G to accept or reject my decision before 21 May 2026.

Mark Louth
Ombudsman