

The complaint

Miss C complains that PROPEL HOLDINGS (UK) LIMITED trading as Quid Market (Quid Market) gave her a loan without carrying out sufficient affordability checks.

What happened

Miss C was advanced one instalment loan of £400 in May 2025 and she was due to make 21 weekly payments of £34.85 – which led to the highest monthly repayment of £174.25. Based on the latest information I have, an outstanding balance remains due.

Quid Market didn't uphold Miss C's complaint and so she referred it to the Financial Ombudsman. It was reviewed by an Investigator, who didn't uphold the complaint because in their view proportionate checks had been conducted. Miss C didn't agree saying in summary.

- At the time of the application, she was in a vulnerable position.
- When she applied for the loan, Quid Market initially declined it before requesting further information from her. Miss C provided a copy of her response. This confirmed that she didn't pay any rent as this was covered through her benefits.
- Miss C provided a copy of a default notice, copy bank statements, self-employment details and a benefit awards letter.

The Investigator explained why these comments didn't change their mind and as no agreement could be reached the complaint has 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.

We've set out our general approach to complaints about short-term lending - including all the relevant rules, guidance and good industry practice - on our website.

Quid Market had to assess the lending to check if Miss C could afford to pay back the amount she'd borrowed without undue difficulty. It needed to do this in a way which was proportionate to the circumstances. Quid Market's checks could have taken into account a number of different things, such as how much was being lent, the size of the repayments, and Miss C's income and expenditure.

With this in mind, I think in the early stages of a lending relationship, less thorough checks might have been proportionate. But certain factors might suggest Quid Market should have done more to establish that any lending was sustainable for Miss C. These factors include:

- Miss C having a low income (reflecting that it could be more difficult to make any loan repayments to a given loan amount from a lower level of income);
- The amounts to be repaid being especially high (reflecting that it could be more difficult to meet a higher repayment from a particular level of income);

- Miss C having a large number of loans and/or having these loans over a long period of time (reflecting the risk that repeated refinancing may signal that the borrowing had become, or was becoming, unsustainable);
- Miss C coming back for loans shortly after previous borrowing had been repaid (also suggestive of the borrowing becoming unsustainable).

There may even come a point where the lending history and pattern of lending itself clearly demonstrates that the lending was unsustainable for Miss C. As only one loan was approved this doesn't apply to Miss C's complaint.

Quid Market was required to establish whether Miss C could sustainably repay the loan – not just whether she technically had enough money to make her repayments. Having enough money to make the repayments could of course be an indicator that Miss C was able to repay her loan sustainably. But it doesn't automatically follow that this is the case.

Miss C told Quid Market that she received an income of £1,250 per month. Quid Market didn't just rely on what Miss C said – it says that it would've checked either the income electronically – most likely through one of the tools made available by the credit reference agencies or it would've collected payslips.

No payslips have been provided by Quid Market, so on balance it's likely a check was conducted using one of the tools I've mentioned above. Having carried out this further check it relied on the income declared by Miss C.

Miss C says at the time she was in receipt of benefits – and has provided evidence of this as well as being on maternity leave. However, that information wasn't disclosed to Quid Market and as this was the first loan, it was entirely reasonable and proportionate for it to have relied on what it was told by Miss C especially as it cross checked her income at the time.

I would also add that there isn't anything within the regulations that say a lender can't lend to someone on benefits. And for a first loan, using a tool providing by a credit reference agency to cross check an income is fair and reasonable.

In terms of outgoings, Miss C said was a council tenant and her total monthly outgoings came to £500. Quid Market then went about checking the information Miss C had provided along with conducting a credit search – which I'll come on to below.

Having carried out checks into the information Miss C had provided it uplifted her monthly costs to £703 per month. This left disposable income of £558 – which was more than enough to cover the weekly payments Miss C committed to making.

I've also seen an email Quid Market sent to Miss C before it approved the loan – it wanted further information about her circumstances because Miss C had declared she didn't have any rent payments. I've seen the response Miss C said and she told Quid Market that while she did have rent payments this was covered by benefits. I appreciate Miss C says she misreported her housing costs – but I think it was fair for Quid Market to have relied on what she told it bearing in mind what she said was plausible.

As part of the application Quid Market carried out a credit search and it has provided the results. I want to add that there was no requirement for a credit search to be carried out, let alone to a specific standard.

The credit check results didn't show any defaults, types of insolvency or County Court Judgment. The active accounts had been serviced and paid generally as expected and there

wasn't enough recent adverse data to suggest Miss C was either struggling to make her repayments or was in a vulnerable position.

Quid Market also worked out from the results, that Miss C's credit commitments came to about £400 per month – whereas the Investigator said these were slightly higher than that. I'm not intending to make a finding about which numbers were correct because it makes no difference to the outcome – the loan would've looked affordable.

Based solely on the credit check results, there wasn't anything as far as I can see that would've prompted Quid Market to either conduct further checks or to have declined Miss C's application.

Having looked at all the information Miss C provided and the results of Quid Market's own checks I've seen no reason why it would've been concern enough for it to have either declined the application or to have requested further information.

I can see that Miss C has provided copy bank statements covering the period of time leading up to this loan being granted but in the circumstances of this complaint it would've been disproportionate for Quid Market to have considered them.

Taking account, the circumstances of Miss C's application the checks it did overall were proportionate and showed the loan was affordable and I completely accept that Miss C will be disappointed by this outcome.

An outstanding balance remains due, and I would encourage Miss C to discuss her situation with Quid Market to find a mutually agreeable way forward. I would also remind Quid Market of its responsibility to treat Miss C fairly and with forbearance when discussing a way to repay what is due.

I've also considered whether Quid Market acted unfairly or unreasonably in any other way including whether the relationship might have been unfair under s.140A of the Consumer Credit Act 1974. However, for the reasons I've already given, I don't think Quid Market lent irresponsibly to Miss C or otherwise treated her unfairly in relation to this matter. I haven't seen anything to suggest that Section 140A would, given the facts of this complaint, lead to a different outcome here.

My final decision

For the reasons I've outlined above, I am not upholding Miss C's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss C to accept or reject my decision before 2 March 2026.

Robert Walker
Ombudsman