

The complaint

Mr H has complained that Monzo Bank Ltd didn't do enough regarding gambling transactions on his account.

What happened

Mr H has explained that from March 2024, there was excessive gambling on his account. He feels Monzo should have picked up on this, and taken steps to help. Mr H himself applied a gambling block to his account on 15 May 2024.

However, it wasn't until January 2025, after Mr H contacted Monzo about a separate matter, and raised the issue of gambling on the same call, that he was contacted by a specialist team assisting vulnerable consumers. But this should have been escalated to a team dealing specifically with gambling, and it was not.

Monzo acknowledged that it was wrong not to have escalated things to the most appropriate team, and offered Mr H £80 in vouchers to apologise (part of which was for an unrelated complaint).

One of our investigators looked into what had happened. But she didn't think the transactions between March and May 2024, when Mr H applied the block, should reasonably have been something Monzo should have intervened in, particularly given that it had no knowledge until January 2025 that Mr H was vulnerable – and it applied a vulnerability marker to his account at this point.

That said, she thought Mr H should be awarded a further £100 compensation, for not having been passed to the specialist team.

Monzo agreed, but Mr H did not. He feels considerable damage has been done, both financially and mentally, and that Monzo should have seen the signs and contacted him.

The complaint's now been passed to me.

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 agree that a further £100 compensation is fair. I know this will be very disappointing for Mr H, but I'll explain why.

The gambling transactions occurred between March and May 2024, when Mr H applied a block. So, I need to decide whether Monzo should reasonably have intervened during this time. I know Mr H feels it should, and I understand this. But having looked at the account statements, Mr H was maintaining a healthy balance and Monzo hadn't been made aware of any vulnerabilities - so I don't feel that there was enough to trigger contacting Mr H during this period. The basic premise is that customers can do with their funds as they please (with some obvious exceptions). That said, banks should also have mechanisms in place to spot

potential vulnerability. Whilst I fully accept that Mr H had a problem, and was also vulnerable for other reasons, I don't think there was enough, over this 2-3 month period, for this to have been flagged up on Monzo's systems.

I know that the 'healthy balance' I refer to above was an official payout Mr H had received, and he was partially using it for living expenses. Gambling was depleting it. But to determine this, it would have required such a level of scrutiny from Monzo that I think would have been onerous to expect, in the absence of other factors.

I can see that when Mr H raised his concerns with Monzo in January 2025, a team contacted him. This was the vulnerabilities team, not the gambling team, and Monzo accepts it fell short here. So, I agree a further £100 compensation should be paid. But, I think it's important to note that Mr H does not seem to have responded to this contact, and didn't speak to the team until quite some time later. So, I can't conclude, on balance, that he'd have responded had he been contacted by Monzo during the period between March and May 2024 either.

Finally, I'm very sorry that Mr H has been through such a difficult time, and I'm sorry my decision will be disappointing. I can see he's sought help, which must have been difficult, and I very much hope things are improving.

Putting things right

To put things right, Monzo should pay Mr H the further £100 to which it's agreed.

My final decision

It's my final decision to uphold this complaint in part, and require Monzo Bank Ltd to pay Mr H a further £100 in compensation, if it hasn't already.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr H to accept or reject my decision before 18 May 2026.

Elspeth Wood
Ombudsman