

The complaint

Mr C complains Santander UK Plc didn't transfer money from a limited access saver he had into an ISA and a fixed term savings account he set up meaning he's lost out on interest.

What happened

Mr C has a number of accounts including accounts with Santander.

Mr C called Santander on 14 April 2025 to see if he could earn more interest on his money. He says he ended up opening an ISA and a fixed term savings account into which he'd said he wanted to transfer £20,000 and £60,000 from a limited access saver he had which had a balance of over £120,000. He says an agent at Santander helped him through the whole process and that he assumed the money would be transferred.

Mr C says he called Santander again on 6 June 2025 – to transfer money to an account he holds elsewhere – and says he discovered by chance that both of the accounts he'd opened had no money in them. He says he was told to open a new savings account and to complain even though this wasn't what he wanted to do. He says he found the complaints process exhausting and that around 3 July 2025 he transferred £20,000 into the ISA he had set up and opened another fixed term savings account. He also complained to our service.

One of our investigators looked into Mr C's complaint but didn't recommend it be upheld. They said that he hadn't instructed Santander to carry out the transfers. Mr C was unhappy with our investigator's recommendation and asked for his complaint to be referred to an ombudsman. His complaint was, as a result, 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.

Last month I issued a provisional decision in which I said I was minded to uphold this complaint and make an award for any interest Mr C has lost out on (assuming he has). In addition, I said I was minded to require Santander to pay Mr C £200 in compensation for the distress and inconvenience he's been caused. Both parties were invited to comment on my provisional decision. Both did.

Mr C said that he didn't think £200 in compensation reflected the impact this had had on him. He said that his issue could have been resolved swiftly – had a little common sense been applied – and that the uncertainty and delay in resolving the matter had caused him unnecessary worry. Santander didn't agree with my provisional decision either saying that Mr C didn't give a clear instruction asking Santander to make the transfers, he just assumed Santander would do so.

I agree with Santander that Mr C didn't give Santander a clear instruction to make the transfers in question in this complaint for him. That wasn't, however, the basis on which I said I was minded to uphold this complaint. In my provisional decision, I explained why I

thought it should have been clear to the agent that Mr C was working on the assumption that he had already done enough to transfer money into the two new accounts he'd set up. I said:

“It should have been clear to the agent – given the exchanges I've just mentioned – that Mr C was working on the assumption that he had already transferred £80,000 into the two accounts he'd just opened. And that's why – as I mentioned earlier – I think the agent should have said something.”

I said I was minded to uphold the complaint because the agent didn't say anything – had they corrected Mr C I'm satisfied he would have either asked the agent to do the transfers for him or asked what else he needed to do and then do what was necessary. I remain of that view.

In response to my provisional decision, Santander has sent me evidence that shows Mr C lost out on interest as a result of what happened. That's because:

- a) £20,000 that should have been transferred to the 1 year fixed rate ISA offering 4.15% stayed in his everyday saver account until 3 July 2025 earning 1.79% interest; and
- b) £60,000 that should have been transferred to the 1 year fixed term saver earning 3.98% stayed in his everyday saver account until 3 July 2025 earning 1.79% interest.

In addition, because the £60,000 wasn't transferred within 30 days of Mr C opening his 1 year fixed term saver earning 3.98%, Mr C had to open another fixed term saver. This one, however, is only earning 3.64%.

Putting things right

In other words, I'm satisfied that Mr C has lost out on interest – as set out above – and that Santander needs to compensate him for this. In addition, I remain of the view that Santander should pay Mr C £200 in compensation for the for the unnecessary distress and inconvenience he's been caused.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint and require Santander UK Plc to pay Mr C £200 in compensation plus the interest he's lost out on.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 6 January 2026.

Nicolas Atkinson
Ombudsman