

The complaint

Miss C complains Madison CF UK Limited (“118”) treated her unfairly when she entered into a Debt Management Plan (DMP) with a third-party debt charity. She feels they harassed her and continued to communicate with her when they shouldn’t have.

What happened

In August 2024 Miss C took out a loan with 118. It was due to be repaid over 18 months with a monthly amount of £85.26.

Around July 2025, Miss C entered into a DMP with a third-party debt charity. Miss C said during this time, 118 continued to chase her for repayments despite her asking for all communication moving forward to go via the third-party. She said she felt it was harassment and caused her emotional stress and anxiety.

Miss C said she doesn’t believe 118 are treating her fairly and 118’s refusal to accept the repayment plan has left her feeling stuck and hopeless. To put things right, Miss C wants 118 to stop all direct communication, accept the repayment plan and offer compensation and a reduction to the loan to reflect the treatment she’s experienced.

118 responded to the complaint in August 2025. They said they’re not upholding the complaint, but did offer a £30 gesture of goodwill payment. They explained that despite hearing from the third-party, the details they held for Miss C differed from the details they had on file, and because of this they were unable to follow the standard verification process and weren’t authorised to share information with the third-party.

Miss C was unhappy with the response so referred her complaint to our Service. 118 informed us when submitting their file that Miss C had since shared the relevant documents they required with them, and the plan could now commence.

An Investigator here looked into things. They agreed 118 didn’t treat Miss C unfairly, and the details exchanged did differ significantly. They said 118 were fair to question the validity of the request from the third-party.

In response to the opinion, Miss C said she felt more compensation was warranted. She said 118 breached her personal information, she’s not been treated a vulnerable customer and she feels embarrassed.

Because an agreement couldn’t be reached, the complaint has been passed to me to decide.

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've reached the same outcome as the Investigator. I appreciate this will disappoint Miss C, but I'll explain my reasoning below.

Miss C's surname was recorded incorrectly at 118. I've reviewed the application data, and it was entered incorrectly at the time of application. Miss C would've been required to sign the credit agreement with 118 which had the surname spelled incorrectly, so I think she ought to have been aware this was the case.

In any event, how the surname was recorded incorrectly or who did or didn't know isn't really relevant to this complaint. Ultimately, as soon as 118 received correspondence from the third-party debt charity with details that weren't accurate for Miss C, they got in touch with Miss C to attempt to verify that the charity was acting on her behalf.

Miss C, in response to the Investigator's view, said that 118 breached her personal data. But I can't find evidence to agree. By contacting her for verification, they were protecting her data and not sharing it with a third-party who held differing information to them.

I can't see that 118 has treated Miss C unfairly and I don't agree she's not been treated as a vulnerable customer. As soon as 118 received the information they required, they're working with the debt charity to get things back on track.

I'm sorry that Miss C feels harassed and embarrassed, but 118 didn't receive contact from the third-party until late July 2025 so calls prior to that were important to ensure they were treating Miss C with forbearance when she was facing financial difficulty, and calls after that date were to try and resolve the discrepancies. Had Miss C continued to not engage with 118, she wouldn't be able to set up a proper repayment plan.

Miss C feels that she's warranted more than £30, but 118 offered this as a gesture of goodwill, and not as compensation for any wrongdoing. Because I don't feel 118 did anything wrong, I won't be asking them to pay anything more.

I know this will disappoint Miss C, but hopefully she'll feel more comfortable now that a plan can be set up and in place, and future correspondence can go via the third party debt charity she's instructed to manage her DMP.

My final decision

It's my final decision that I do not uphold this complaint against Madison CF UK Limited.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss C to accept or reject my decision before 16 January 2026.

Meg Raymond
Ombudsman