

The complaint

Mr C complains that Skril Ltd blocked and then closed his account without notice. It then refused to pay him the funds held to the credit of the account but debited it with a “Repair Fee”.

What happened

In March 2024 Mr C opened an account with Skril. The account is a pre-paid card account, and Mr C has explained that he opened it so that he could use online betting sites without having to use his main bank account.

Over the following months, Mr C had some winnings of a few hundred pounds each, which were credited to the account. He then received into the account:

- on 1 July 2024, £407.92 from a merchant, T;
- on 2 July 2024, £370.00 from a merchant, S; and
- on 8 July 2024, £4,000.00, also from S.

T and S are both online betting sites, and the payments appeared on Mr C’s statement as “Gaming Payment Transaction”, as had previous betting payments.

Skril decided to carry out an audit of the account. As part of that exercise, Skril asked Mr C to provide evidence showing that the payments were genuine. Mr C sent screenshots showing the payments, but Skril was not satisfied that they met its criteria. Skril then closed Mr C’s account with immediate effect and has since declined to pay the account funds to Mr C. The balance at the point of closure was £4,457.67, less a “Repair Fee”.

Mr C complained about what had happened, first to Skril and then to this service. One of our investigators considered the complaint and issued a preliminary assessment, in which he said, in summary:

- Skril was within its rights to review the activity on the account and to ask Mr C about it.
- It was also within its rights to close the account, but the investigator thought that it should have given 60 days’ notice before doing so.
- However, Skril should not have retained the funds in the account.
- It should not have charged the fee of £52.19.
- To resolve matters, Skril should pay Mr C the account balance, together with simple interest at 8% a year, refund the fee, and pay Mr C a further £150 for distress and inconvenience.

Skril did not accept the investigator’s recommendation, although it did not provide any further arguments or evidence. It asked that an ombudsman review the case.

I did that and issued a provisional decision. I explained that I was broadly in agreement with the investigator's findings. Skrill had acted within its rights when it decided to review the account, and it was reasonable to restrict its operation while it did so.

It was reasonable too for Skrill to decide that it no longer wanted to provide Mr C with account facilities, although it should have given him 60 days' notice of its intention to do so.

I agreed too that Skrill should not have charged a "Repair Fee" and that it should be refunded. Skrill had not explained why that fee had been deducted from the account balance.

In respect of the main element of Mr C's complaint – that Skrill had not released the account balance to him – I said:

I turn next to the account balance. Skrill has refused to release it because, it appears, Mr C has not been able to meet its criteria for proving he is entitled to the funds. But that is, as much as anything, because of the documentation which T produces when it makes payments. I have seen nothing which would indicate that Mr C is not entitled to the funds still held to the credit of his account, and I am not aware that anyone else has made a claim in respect of the payments made in July 2024. I believe Skrill should have released the funds to Mr C on or about 8 August 2024.

Finally, I considered that the investigator's recommendation that Skrill pay Mr C £150 in recognition of the distress and inconvenience caused by its actions be increased to £350.

Skrill did not respond to my provisional decision by the deadline of 28 November 2025, but Mr C did accept it.

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.

As Mr C has accepted my findings but Skrill has not replied to them, I see no reason to change them. I stress that I have considered everything afresh before reaching this final decision.

My final decision

For these reasons, my final decision is that, to resolve Mr C's complaint in full, Skrill Ltd should pay him:

- £4,457.67 (the account balance at closure but before the deduction of the "Repair Fee"), together with interest at 8% a year simple from 8 August 2024 to the date of payment; and
- £350 in recognition of the distress which Mr C has suffered and the inconvenience to which he has been put.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 19 January 2026.

Mike Ingram
Ombudsman