

## **The complaint**

Madison CF UK Limited, trading as 118 118 Money, provided Mr S with a credit card in January 2025. It had a credit limit of £1,000, which was then increased to £1,600 in July 2025. Mr S says the credit was provided irresponsibly.

## **What happened**

The details of this complaint are well known to both parties, so I won't repeat them here. The facts aren't in dispute, so I'll focus on giving the reasons for my 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.

The rules and regulations in place at the time 118 118 Money provided Mr S with the credit required them to conduct reasonable and proportionate assessments of whether he could afford to repay what he owed in a sustainable manner. This is sometimes referred to as an 'affordability assessment' or 'affordability check.'

The checks had to be 'borrower' focused. This means 118 118 Money had to think about whether repaying the credit would cause difficulties or adverse consequences for Mr S. In other words, it wasn't enough for 118 118 Money to consider the likelihood of them getting the funds back – they had to consider the impact of any repayments on Mr S.

Checks also had to be 'proportionate' to the specific circumstances of the lending. In general, what constitutes a proportionate affordability check will be dependent on a number of factors including – but not limited to – the particular circumstances of the consumer (e.g. their financial history, current situation and outlook, any indications of vulnerability or financial difficulty) and the amount/type/cost of credit they were seeking. I've kept all of this in mind when thinking about whether 118 118 Money did what they needed to before providing the credit card and subsequently increasing the credit limit.

I've decided the credit was provided fairly for the following reasons:

- 118 118 Money considered information Mr S provided in his application and gathered information from a credit reference agency (CRA) before providing the credit card.
- Mr S declared a monthly income of around £2,789 and commitments of £550 for rent.
- Before issuing the credit card 118 118 Money calculated from the CRA checks that his monthly commitments to existing debt would be around £90 and estimated his other living expenses to be around £480. The CRA report showed a previous default around three years before the credit card was provided, but no adverse information on any open accounts.

- 118 118 Money performed similar checks before increasing the limit, with the only notable difference being that Mr S' monthly payments towards existing credit had increased to around £300. Mr S had exceeded his credit limit three months earlier, by £50, but this was brought back within the limit by an overpayment the following month.
- Based on this information, 118 118 Money considered the repayments to be affordable for Mr S, even if the full credit limit was utilised. They also didn't think that his previous default should prevent them proceeding.
- I've reviewed the information referred to above and completed my own affordability assessment, for both the initial provision of the credit card and the subsequent credit limit increase. Having done so I am comfortable that 118 118 Money took a reasonable approach for assessing Mr S' committed non-discretionary expenditure, using figures from Mr S' application where available, and reasonably calculated figures where they weren't.
- I think the checks 118 118 Money did before providing the credit were reasonable and proportionate, given the credit limits they offered and the information available to them. Mr S has provided us with copies of his bank statements to support his position, but I don't consider 118 118 Money needed to review them given what their checks and affordability assessment showed. So, whilst I appreciate his strength of feeling, and thank him for his openness regarding his circumstances, I don't consider it would be fair to place weight on the content of his bank statements in determining whether 118 118 Money fairly provided credit.

This means I don't think 118 118 Money did anything wrong when it provided the credit card to Mr S.

I've also considered whether the relationship might have been unfair to Mr S under Section 140A of the Consumer Credit Act 1974. However, for the reasons I've already explained, I don't think 118 118 Money lent irresponsibly to Mr S or otherwise treated him unfairly. I haven't seen anything to suggest that Section 140A or anything else would, given the facts of this complaint, lead to a different outcome here.

Whilst I know this isn't the outcome Mr S hoped for, if he feels he's in financial difficulties then I'd encourage him to speak with 118 118 Money to agree an affordable repayment plan. I remind 118 118 Money of their obligation to treat customers in financial difficulty fairly.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I'm not upholding Mr S's complaint about Madison CF UK Limited, trading as 118 118 Money, for the reasons outlined above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 12 March 2026.

David Barker  
**Ombudsman**