

The complaint

Ms S' complaint is, in essence, that Clydesdale Financial Services Limited (the 'Lender') acted unfairly and unreasonably by (1) being party to an unfair credit relationship with her under Section 140A of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 (as amended) (the 'CCA') and (2) deciding against paying a claim under Section 75 of the CCA.

What happened

Ms S and Ms B were members of a timeshare provider (the 'Supplier') – having purchased a number of products from it over time. But the product at the centre of this complaint is their membership of a timeshare that I'll call the 'Fractional Club' – which they bought on 1 October 2015 (the 'Time of Sale'). They entered into an agreement with the Supplier to buy 1,500 bi-annual fractional points at a cost of £16,343 after trading in an existing fractional timeshare purchase the net cost to Ms S and Ms B was £8,543 (the 'Purchase Agreement').

Fractional Club membership was asset backed – which meant it gave Ms S and Ms B more than just holiday rights. It also included a share in the net sale proceeds of a property named on the Purchase Agreement (the 'Allocated Property') after their membership term ends.

Ms S and Ms B paid for their Fractional Club membership by taking finance of £24,544 from the Lender (the 'Credit Agreement') in Ms S' sole name. As such Ms S is the only person who can bring this complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service.

Ms S' loan was settled on 12 April 2017.

Ms S – using a professional representative (the 'PR') – wrote to the Lender on 18 August 2022 (the 'Letter of Complaint') to raise a number of different concerns. As those concerns haven't changed since they were first raised, and as both sides are familiar with them, it isn't necessary to repeat them in detail here beyond the summary above.

The Lender was unable to issue its final response letter. The complaint was then referred to the Financial Ombudsman Service. It was assessed by an Investigator who, having considered the information on file, rejected the complaint on its merits.

Ms S disagreed with the Investigator's assessment and asked for an Ombudsman's decision – which is why it was passed to me.

I considered the matter and issued a provisional decision (the 'PD') dated 5 December 2025. In that decision, I said:

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. And having done that, I do not think this complaint should be upheld.

However, before I explain why, I want to make it clear that my role as an Ombudsman is not to address every single point that has been made to date. Instead, it is to decide what is fair

and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. So, if I have not commented on, or referred to, something that either party has said, that does not mean I have not considered it.

Section 75 of the CCA: the Supplier's misrepresentations at the Time of Sale

The CCA introduced a regime of connected lender liability under Section 75 that affords consumers ("debtors") a right of recourse against lenders that provide the finance for the acquisition of goods or services from third-party merchants ("suppliers") in the event that there is an actionable misrepresentation and/or breach of contract by the supplier.

Certain conditions must be met if the protection afforded to consumers is engaged, including, for instance, the cash price of the purchase and the nature of the arrangements between the parties involved in the transaction. The Lender doesn't dispute that the relevant conditions are met. But for reasons I'll come on to below, it isn't necessary to make any formal findings on them here.

I don't think it would be fair or reasonable to uphold this complaint for reasons relating to Ms S' Section 75 claim. As a general rule, creditors can reasonably reject Section 75 claims that they are first informed about after the claim has become time-barred under the Limitation Act 1980 (the 'LA') as it wouldn't be fair to expect creditors to look into such claims so long after the liability arose and after a limitation defence would be available in court. So, it is relevant to consider whether Ms S' Section 75 claim was time-barred under the LA before she put it to the Lender.

A claim under Section 75 is a "like" claim against the creditor. It essentially mirrors the claim the consumer could make against the Supplier.

A claim for misrepresentation against the Supplier would ordinarily be made under Section 2 (1) of the Misrepresentation Act 1967. And the limitation period to make such a claim expires six years from the date on which the cause of action accrued (see Section 2 of the LA).

But a claim, like the one in question here, under Section 75 is also 'an action to recover any sum by virtue of any enactment' under Section 9 of the LA. And the limitation period under that provision is also six years from the date on which the cause of action accrued.

The date on which the cause of action accrued was the Time of Sale. That's because Ms S entered into the Purchase Agreement at that time based on the alleged misrepresentations of the Supplier – which she says she relied on. And as the loan from the Lender was used to help finance the purchase, it was when she entered into the Credit Agreement that she suffered a loss.

Ms S first notified the Lender of her Section 75 claim on 18 August 2022. And as more than six years had passed between the Time of Sale (1 October 2015) and when she first put her claim to the Lender, I don't think it was unfair or unreasonable of the Lender not to uphold Ms S' concerns about the Supplier's alleged misrepresentations.

Section 140A of the CCA: did the Lender participate in an unfair credit relationship?

I've already explained why I'm not looking at the allegations made that Fractional Club membership was actionably misrepresented by the Supplier at the Time of Sale. But there are other aspects of the sales process that, being the subject of dissatisfaction, I must explore with Section 140A in mind if I'm to consider this complaint in full – which is what I've

done next.

Having considered the entirety of the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender along with all of the circumstances of the complaint, I don't think the credit relationship between them was likely to have been rendered unfair for the purposes of Section 140A. When coming to that conclusion, and in carrying out my analysis, I have looked at:

- 1. The standard of the Supplier's commercial conduct – which includes its sales and marketing practices at the Time of Sale along with any relevant training material;*
- 2. The provision of information by the Supplier at the Time of Sale, including the contractual documentation and disclaimers made by the Supplier;*
- 3. Evidence provided by both parties on what was likely to have been said and/or done at the Time of Sale;*
- 4. The inherent probabilities of the sale given its circumstances; and, when relevant*
- 5. Any existing unfairness from a related credit agreement.*

I have then considered the impact of these on the fairness of the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender.

The Supplier's sales & marketing practices at the Time of Sale

Ms S' complaint about the Lender being party to an unfair credit relationship was made for several reasons.

The PR says, for instance, that the right checks weren't carried out before the Lender lent to Ms S. I haven't seen anything to persuade me that was the case in this complaint given its circumstances. But even if I were to find that the Lender failed to do everything it should have when it agreed to lend (and I make no such finding), I would have to be satisfied that the money lent to Ms S was actually unaffordable before also concluding that she lost out as a result and then consider whether the credit relationship with the Lender was unfair to her for this reason. But from the information provided, I am not satisfied that the lending was unaffordable for Ms S.

Connected to this is the suggestion by the PR that the Credit Agreement was arranged by an unauthorised credit broker, the upshot of which is to suggest that the Lender wasn't permitted to enforce the Credit Agreement. However, it looks to me like Ms S knew, amongst other things, how much she was borrowing and repaying each month, who she was borrowing from and that she was borrowing money to pay for Fractional Club membership. And as the lending doesn't look like it was unaffordable for her, even if the Credit Agreement was arranged by a broker that didn't have the necessary permission to do so (which I make no formal finding on), I can't see why that led to Ms S' financial loss – such that I can say that the credit relationship in question was unfair on her as a result. And with that being the case, I'm not persuaded that it would be fair or reasonable to tell the Lender to compensate her, even if the loan wasn't arranged properly.

The PR also says that there was one or more unfair contract terms in the Purchase Agreement. But as I can't see that any such terms were operated unfairly against Ms S in practice, nor that any such terms led her to behave in a certain way to their detriment, I'm not persuaded that any of the terms governing Fractional Club membership are likely to have led to an unfairness that warrants a remedy.

I acknowledge that Ms S may have felt weary after a sales process that went on for a long time. But she says little about what was said and/or done by the Supplier during their sales presentation that made her feel as if she had no choice but to purchase Fractional Club membership when she simply did not want to. She was also given a 14-day cooling off

period and she has not provided a credible explanation for why she did not cancel her membership during that time. And with all of that being the case, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that Ms S made the decision to purchase Fractional Club membership because her ability to exercise that choice was significantly impaired by pressure from the Supplier.

In taking out this loan, Ms S consolidated previous credit she had with the Lender which was used to finance an earlier fractional timeshare purchase. That means I've considered whether there was any existing unfairness from that related credit agreement. Having done so, I am not satisfied that there was existing unfairness that I need to take into account here.

Overall, therefore, I don't think that Ms S' credit relationship with the Lender was rendered unfair to her under Section 140A for any of the reasons above. But there is another reason, perhaps the main reason, why the PR says the credit relationship with the Lender was unfair to her. And that's the suggestion that Fractional Club membership was marketed and sold to her as an investment in breach of prohibition against selling timeshares in that way.

The Supplier's alleged breach of Regulation 14(3) of the Timeshare Regulations

The Lender does not dispute, and I am satisfied, that Ms S' Fractional Club membership met the definition of a "timeshare contract" and was a "regulated contract" for the purposes of the Timeshare Regulations.

Regulation 14(3) of the Timeshare Regulations prohibited the Supplier from marketing or selling Fractional Club membership as an investment. This is what the provision said at the Time of Sale:

"A trader must not market or sell a proposed timeshare contract or long-term holiday product contract as an investment if the proposed contract would be a regulated contract."

But the PR says that the Supplier did exactly that at the Time of Sale – saying, in summary, that Ms S was told by the Supplier that Fractional Club membership was the type of investment that would only increase in value.

The term "investment" is not defined in the Timeshare Regulations. But for the purposes of this provisional decision, and by reference to the decided authorities, an investment is a transaction in which money or other property is laid out in the expectation or hope of financial gain or profit.

A share in the Allocated Property clearly constituted an investment as it offered Ms S the prospect of a financial return – whether or not, like all investments, that was more than what they first put into it. But it is important to note at this stage that the fact that Fractional Club membership included an investment element did not, itself, transgress the prohibition in Regulation 14(3). That provision prohibits the marketing and selling of a timeshare contract as an investment. It doesn't prohibit the mere existence of an investment element in a timeshare contract or prohibit the marketing and selling of such a timeshare contract per se.

In other words, the Timeshare Regulations did not ban products such as the Fractional Club. They just regulated how such products were marketed and sold.

To conclude, therefore, that Fractional Club membership was marketed or sold to Ms S as an investment in breach of Regulation 14(3), I have to be persuaded that it was more likely than not that the Supplier marketed and/or sold membership to her as an investment, i.e.

told her or led her to believe that Fractional Club membership offered her the prospect of a financial gain (i.e. a profit) given the facts and circumstances of this complaint.

There is competing evidence in this complaint as to whether Fractional Club membership was marketed and/or sold by the Supplier at the Time of Sale as an investment in breach of regulation 14(3) of the Timeshare Regulations.

On the one hand, it is clear that the Supplier made efforts to avoid specifically describing membership of the Fractional Club as an 'investment' or quantifying to prospective purchasers, such as Ms S, the financial value of their share in the net sales proceeds of the Allocated Property along with the investment considerations, risks and rewards attached to them.

On the other hand, I acknowledge that the Supplier's sales process left open the possibility that the sales representative may have positioned Fractional Club membership as an investment. So, I accept that it's equally possible that Fractional Club membership was marketed and sold to Ms S as an investment in breach of Regulation 14(3).

However, whether or not there was a breach of the relevant prohibition by the Supplier is not ultimately determinative of the outcome in this complaint for reasons I will come on to shortly. And with that being the case, it's not necessary to make a formal finding on that particular issue for the purposes of this decision.

Was the credit relationship between the Lender and Ms S rendered unfair?

Having found that it was possible that the Supplier breached Regulation 14(3) of the Timeshare Regulations at the Time of Sale, I now need to consider what impact that breach had on the fairness of the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender under the Credit Agreement and related Purchase Agreement as the case law on Section 140A makes it clear that regulatory breaches do not automatically create unfairness for the purposes of that provision. Such breaches and their consequences (if there are any) must be considered in the round, rather than in a narrow or technical way.

Indeed, it seems to me that, if I am to conclude that a breach of Regulation 14(3) led to a credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender that was unfair to her and warranted relief as a result, whether the Supplier's breach of Regulation 14(3) led her to enter into the Purchase Agreement and the Credit Agreement is an important consideration.

The letter of complaint sent to the Lender contains nothing in the way of personal testimony from Ms S. And it was only after the Investigator issued their view that we received a statement from her setting out her dealings with the Supplier.

In terms of her first Fractional Club purchase (in 2014) Ms S says:

"It was described as a share of a property that at the end of the term would be sold and I would get my share of the selling price, and in the meanwhile be able to enjoy many holidays."

And of the Time of Sale, Ms S said:

"Then my friend and I, having been escorted around one of the very luxurious suites in the [location] Signature Collection, were invited to attend a presentation to upgrade to one of these, being more luxurious. It was presented as a valuable asset that when eventually sold would provide a share of the sale price with a better return."

During the presentation, we were persuaded to sign a contract for fractional ownership of one of these suites, which the sales rep suggested could be financed by a loan. I was then pressurised into signing a loan agreement in my sole name.”

On my reading of Ms S’ testimony her comments relating to her initial fractional club membership appear to be a factual description of how the membership worked. Her comments relating to her second purchase are similar in nature. Ms S does indicate that she was told at the Time of Sale that she would have a valuable asset from which she would receive ‘a better return’ - adding to her allegation of the Supplier’s breach of Regulation 14(3).

However, in my view, there’s a distinction between Ms S recalling that she was told something and that being the reason Ms S’ purchase was made. Ms S’ statement also refers to the quality of the accommodation she was shown and the pressure she says she felt to take out a loan. But she doesn’t specifically say what had motivated her to make her purchase and so I cannot say that the prospect of a financial gain from Fractional Club membership was an important and motivating factor for Ms S when she decided to go ahead with her purchase.

That doesn’t mean she wasn’t interested in a share in the Allocated Property. After all, that wouldn’t be surprising given the nature of the product at the centre of this complaint. But as Ms S herself doesn’t persuade me that her purchase was motivated by her share in the Allocated Property and the possibility of a profit, I don’t think a breach of Regulation 14(3) by the Supplier was likely to have been material to the decision Ms S ultimately made.

On balance, therefore, even if the Supplier had marketed or sold the Fractional Club membership as an investment in breach of Regulation 14(3) of the Timeshare Regulations, I am not persuaded that Ms S’ decision to purchase Fractional Club membership at the Time of Sale was motivated by the prospect of a financial gain (i.e. a profit). And it follows that I am unable to conclude that Ms S would not have pressed ahead with her purchase whether or not there had been a breach of Regulation 14(3). And for that reason, I do not think the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender was unfair to her even if the Supplier had breached Regulation 14(3).

In conclusion, given the facts and circumstances of this complaint, I did not think that the Lender acted unfairly or unreasonably when it dealt with Ms S’ Section 75 claim, and I was not persuaded that the Lender was party to a credit relationship with her under the Credit Agreement that was unfair to her for the purposes of Section 140A of the CCA. And having taken everything into account, I could see no other reason why it would be fair or reasonable to direct the Lender to compensate her.

The Lender responded to the PD and accepted it.

The PR also responded – they did not accept the PD and provided some further comments and evidence they wish to be considered.

Having received the relevant responses from both parties, I’m now finalising my decision.

The legal and regulatory context

In considering what is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the complaint, I am required under DISP 3.6.4R to take into account: relevant (i) law and regulations; (ii) regulators' rules, guidance and standards; and (iii) codes of practice; and (where appropriate), what I consider to have been good industry practice at the relevant time.

The legal and regulatory context that I think is relevant to this complaint is, in many ways, no different to that shared in several hundred published ombudsman decisions on very similar complaints – which can be found on the Financial Ombudsman Service's website. And with that being the case, it is not necessary to set out that context in detail here. But I would add that the following regulatory rules/guidance are also relevant:

The Consumer Credit Sourcebook ('CONC') – Found in the Financial Conduct Authority's (the 'FCA') Handbook of Rules and Guidance

Below are the most relevant provisions and/or guidance as they were at the relevant time:

- CONC 3.7.3 [R]
- CONC 4.5.3 [R]
- CONC 4.5.2 [G]

The FCA's Principles

The rules on consumer credit sit alongside the wider obligations of firms, such as the Principles for Businesses ('PRIN'). Set out below are those that are most relevant to this complaint:

- Principle 6
- Principle 7
- Principle 8

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.

Following the responses from both parties, I've considered the case afresh and having done so, I've reached the same decision as that which I outlined in my provisional findings, for broadly the same reasons.

Again, my role as an Ombudsman isn't to address every single point which has been made to date, but to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. If I haven't commented on, or referred to, something that either party has said, this doesn't mean I haven't considered it.

Rather, I've focused here on addressing what I consider to be the key issues in deciding this complaint and explaining the reasons for reaching my final decision.

The PR's further comments in response to the PD only relate to the issue of whether the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender was unfair. In particular, the PR has provided further comments in relation to whether the membership was sold to Ms S as an investment at the Time of Sale. They've also now argued for the first time that the payment of a commission by the Lender to the Supplier led to an unfair credit relationship.

As outlined in my PD, the PR originally raised various other points of complaint, all of which I addressed at that time. But they didn't make any further comments in relation to those in their response to my PD. Indeed, they haven't said they disagree with any of my provisional conclusions in relation to those other points. And since I haven't been provided with anything more in relation to those other points by either party, I see no reason to change my conclusions in relation to them as set out in my PD. So, I'll focus here on the PR's points raised in response.

Section 140A of the CCA: did the Lender participate in an unfair credit relationship?

The Supplier's alleged breach of Regulation 14(3) of the Timeshare regulations

As I explained in my PD, I did not consider Ms S had been clear as to the motive for her purchase of Fractional Club membership. So, I wasn't persuaded that the evidence suggested that Ms S purchased Fractional Club membership in whole or in part down to any breach of Regulation 14(3).

The PR did not agree. It said Ms S' description of the Time of Sale includes reference to a 'better return' therefore by implication that purchase offered improved financial value (and not only improved accommodation). For the avoidance of doubt, I agree that Ms S' reference to a better return, in the context of her statement does refer to a financial return. Ms S' recollections support the allegation made that the Supplier breached Regulation 14(3).

In any case, as I set out in my PD, I've accepted that it was possible that the Supplier had breached Regulation 14(3). But it does not automatically follow that Ms S' complaint should be upheld. I need to consider whether any breach by the Supplier led to Ms S' purchase. That's why I've considered Ms S' testimony not only in terms of what she recollects about the Time of Sale but also in terms of what her statement says about her motivations for purchase.

The PR also said that it was an artificial distinction to separate out Ms S' recollections and motivations. Motivation is inferred from the nature of the representations made, their timing and the consumer's subsequent actions. In this case, the PR said, it's reasonable to infer that the promise of superior financial performance was a key inducement to the purchase.

I don't agree with the PR that Ms S' recollections and motivations must inevitably be the same. And I'm not persuaded that I can infer Ms S' motivation to purchase from the statement she has provided. With that being the case, I can't fairly conclude that any breach of Regulation 14(3) was material to Ms S' decision to purchase Fractional Club membership.

The PR says that as the Supplier's pricing sheet set out the "unit share" Ms S acquired under her Fractional Club membership, this shows the investment element played "quite an important role" in convincing her to purchase it. However, the pricing sheet was a proforma document that captured a number of details about the purchase in a standardised format. And the Supplier would have recorded that information irrespective of the customer's motivations for purchasing. So, I don't consider this document offers any insight into Ms S' motivation for making her purchase.

So, ultimately, for the above reasons, along with those I already explained in my PD, I remain unpersuaded that any breach of Regulation 14(3) was material to Ms S' purchasing decision.

The PR also said that in the judgment handed down in *Shawbrook & BPF v FOS*, it was not

challenged that the product in question was marketed and sold as an investment. But, as I explained in my provisional decision, the Timeshare Regulations did not ban products such as the Fractional Club. They just regulated how such products were marketed and sold. And the judgment referred to did not make a blanket finding that all such products were mis-sold in the way the PR appears to be suggesting. Any complaint needs to be considered in the light of its specific circumstances.

So, as I said before, even if the Supplier had marketed or sold the membership as an investment in breach of Regulation 14(3) (which I still make no finding on here), I'm not persuaded Ms S' decision to make the purchase was motivated by the prospect of a financial gain. So, I still don't think the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender was unfair to her for this reason.

The provision of information by the Supplier at the Time of Sale

The PR says that a payment of commission from the Lender to the Supplier at the Time of Sale should lead me to uphold this complaint because, simply put, information in relation to that payment went undisclosed at the Time of Sale.

As both sides already know, the Supreme Court handed down an important judgment on 1 August 2025 in a series of cases concerned with the issue of commission: *Johnson v FirstRand Bank Ltd, Wrench v FirstRand Bank Ltd and Hopcraft v Close Brothers Ltd [2025] UKSC 33* ('Hopcraft, Johnson and Wrench').

The Supreme Court ruled that, in each of the three cases, the commission payments made to car dealers by lenders were legal, as claims for the tort of bribery, or the dishonest assistance of a breach of fiduciary duty, had to be predicated on the car dealer owing a fiduciary duty to the consumer, which the car dealers did not owe. A "disinterested duty", as described in *Wood v Commercial First Business Ltd & ors and Business Mortgage Finance 4 plc v Pengelly [2021] EWCA Civ 471*, is not enough.

However, the Supreme Court held that the credit relationship between the lender and Mr Johnson was unfair under Section 140A of the CCA because of the commission paid by the lender to the car dealer. The main reasons for coming to that conclusion included, amongst other things, the following factors:

1. The size of the commission (as a percentage of the total charge for credit). In Mr Johnson's case it was 55%. This was "so high" and "a powerful indication that the relationship...was unfair" (see paragraph 327);
2. The failure to disclose the commission; and
3. The concealment of the commercial tie between the car dealer and the lender.

The Supreme Court also confirmed that the following factors, in what was a non-exhaustive list, will normally be relevant when assessing whether a credit relationship was/is unfair under Section 140A of the CCA:

1. The size of the commission as a proportion of the charge for credit;
2. The way in which commission is calculated (a discretionary commission arrangement, for example, may lead to higher interest rates);
3. The characteristics of the consumer;
4. The extent of any disclosure and the manner of that disclosure (which, insofar as Section 56 of the CCA is engaged, includes any disclosure by a supplier when acting as a broker); and
5. Compliance with the regulatory rules.

From my reading of the Supreme Court's judgment in *Hopcraft, Johnson and Wrench*, it sets out principles which apply to credit brokers other than car dealer-credit brokers. So, when considering allegations of undisclosed payments of commission like the one in this complaint, *Hopcraft, Johnson and Wrench* is relevant law that I'm required to consider under Rule 3.6.4 of the Financial Conduct Authority's Dispute Resolution Rules ('DISP').

But I don't think *Hopcraft, Johnson and Wrench* assists Ms S in arguing that her credit relationship with the Lender was unfair to her for reasons relating to commission given the facts and circumstances of this complaint.

I haven't seen anything to suggest that the Lender and Supplier were tied to one another contractually or commercially in a way that wasn't properly disclosed to Ms S, nor have I seen anything that persuades me that the commission arrangement between them gave the Supplier a choice over the interest rate that led Ms S into a credit agreement that cost disproportionately more than it otherwise could have.

I acknowledge that it's possible that the Lender and the Supplier failed to follow the regulatory guidance in place at the Time of Sale insofar as it was relevant to disclosing the commission arrangements between them.

But as I've said before, the case law on Section 140A makes it clear that regulatory breaches do not automatically create unfairness for the purposes of that provision. Such breaches and their consequences (if there are any) must be considered in the round, rather than in a narrow or technical way. And with that being the case, it isn't necessary to make a formal finding on that because, even if the Lender and the Supplier failed to follow the relevant regulatory guidance at the Time of Sale, it is for the reasons set out below that I don't think any such failure is itself a reason to find the credit relationship in question unfair to Ms S.

In stark contrast to the facts of Mr Johnson's case, the amount of commission paid by the Lender to the Supplier for arranging the Credit Agreement that Ms S entered into wasn't high. It was only 2.5% of the amount borrowed. So, had she known at the Time of Sale that the Supplier was going to be paid a flat rate of commission at that level, I'm not currently persuaded that she either wouldn't have understood that or would have otherwise questioned the size of the payment at that time. After all, Ms S wanted Fractional Club membership and had no obvious means of her own to pay for it. And at such a low level, the impact of commission on the cost of the credit she needed for a timeshare she wanted doesn't strike me as disproportionate. So, I think she would still have taken out the loan to fund her purchase at the Time of Sale had the amount of commission been disclosed.

What's more, based on what I've seen so far, the Supplier's role as a credit broker wasn't a separate service and distinct from its role as the seller of timeshares. It was simply a means to an end in the Supplier's overall pursuit of a successful timeshare sale. I can't see that the Supplier gave an undertaking – either expressly or impliedly – to put to one side its commercial interests in pursuit of that goal when arranging the Credit Agreement. And as it wasn't acting as an agent of Ms S but as the supplier of contractual rights she obtained under the Purchase Agreement, the transaction doesn't strike me as one with features that suggest the Supplier had an obligation of 'loyalty' to her when arranging the Credit Agreement and thus a fiduciary duty.

Overall, therefore, I'm not persuaded that the commission arrangements between the Supplier and the Lender were likely to have led to a sufficiently extreme inequality of knowledge that rendered the credit relationship unfair to Ms S.

Section 140A conclusion

Given all of the factors I've looked at in this part of my decision, and having taken all of them into account, I'm not persuaded that the credit relationship between Ms S and the Lender under the Credit Agreement and related Purchase Agreement was unfair to her. So, I don't think it is fair or reasonable that I uphold this complaint on that basis.

Commission: The Alternative Grounds of Complaint

While I've found that Ms S' credit relationship with the Lender wasn't unfair to her for reasons relating to the commission arrangements between it and the Supplier, two of the grounds on which I came to that conclusion also constitute separate and freestanding complaints to Ms S complaint about an unfair credit relationship. So, for completeness, I've considered those grounds on that basis here.

The first ground relates to whether the Lender is liable for the dishonest assistance of a breach of fiduciary duty by the Supplier because it took a payment of commission from the Lender without telling Ms S (i.e. secretly). And the second relates to the Lender's compliance with the regulatory guidance in place at the Time of Sale insofar as it was relevant to disclosing the commission arrangements between them.

However, for the reasons I set out above, I'm not persuaded that the Supplier – when acting as credit broker – owed Ms S a fiduciary duty. So, the remedies that might be available at law in relation to the payment of secret commission aren't, in my view, available to her. And while it's possible that the Lender failed to follow the regulatory guidance in place at the Time of Sale insofar as it was relevant to disclosing the commission arrangements between it and the Supplier, I don't think any such failure on the Lender's part is itself a reason to uphold this complaint because, for the reasons I also set out above, I think she would still have taken out the loan to fund her purchase at the Time of Sale had there been more adequate disclosure of the commission arrangements that applied at that time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, given the facts and circumstances of this complaint, I do not think that the Lender acted unfairly or unreasonably when it dealt with Ms S' Section 75 claim, and I am not persuaded that the Lender was party to a credit relationship with her under the Credit Agreement that was unfair to her for the purposes of Section 140A of the CCA. And having taken everything into account, I see no other reason why it would be fair or reasonable to direct the Lender to compensate her.

My final decision

For the reasons set out above, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms S to accept or reject my decision before 20 March 2026.

Claire Poyntz
Ombudsman