

The complaint

Mrs W complains that Accredited Insurance (Europe) Ltd (“Accredited”) has unfairly handled a claim made under her home insurance policy.

Any reference to Mrs W or Accredited includes respective agents or representatives.

What happened

The background of this complaint is well known between the parties so I’m just going to provide a summary of what’s happened.

- In July 2024 Mrs W took out her home insurance with Accredited. In October 2024 Mrs W purchased a bracelet for £3,600. And she had this item specified on her home insurance policy as a valuable for its purchase price.
- In May 2025 Mrs W lost her bracelet. She contacted Accredited and made a claim. Its specialist jeweller carried out a validation report and following a review of this, Accredited offered a cash settlement of £2,844 to Mrs W (minus the £500 excess). It said this was reflective of what it would’ve cost its jeweller to replace the item had it been worth £3,600.
- Accredited subsequently reviewed its offer of settlement and increased this to £3,600 (minus the £500 excess). Around this time, Accredited’s jeweller had placed a valuation of £6,330 for the bracelet in question.
- Following Mrs W’s complaint Accredited provided its final response letter on 17 July 2025. It detailed the history of the claim and said its settlement was in line with the specified sum in the schedule and in line with its policy terms.
- Mrs W brought her complaint to this Service. She said she would like a replacement bracelet, or a cash settlement reflective of its actual value alongside other costs incurred. Our Investigator didn’t uphold the case, saying:
 - The policy terms clearly set out that Accredited was allowed to determine how to settle the claim – whether to cash settle, repair or replace items.
 - The policy said the maximum sum Mrs W could claim for a specified item was its listed value within the schedule. Accredited’s decision to pay £3,600 was in line with the insured sum for the item – so it didn’t need to do anything further.
 - The policy also clearly set out that it was the policyholder’s responsibility to ensure the sums insured were in line with their current market value. So while the item’s value had risen dramatically, this wasn’t the responsibility of Accredited.
- Mrs W responded to raise the following concerns, saying:
 - Accredited hadn’t met its obligations under Consumer Duty and hadn’t made proactive reminders or provided guidance about revaluations despite this being a foreseeable issue in light of gold and diamond price volatility.
 - Accredited’s policy wording was unclear, and it was unreasonable to interpret

this as meaning continuous revaluations should be carried out.

- Accredited's own valuations appeared to differ greatly between £2,844 and £6,330. She said it was not fair for Accredited to rely on the lower figure and disregard its own later figure. And its settlement was not fair and reasonable as it left Mrs W under-compensated. Mrs W referred to two final decisions issued by this Service that she says supports her position.
- The Investigator looked again and didn't change his mind, saying:
 - He wasn't persuaded the relevant rules required Accredited to provide reminders or further guidance about revaluations – and that Accredited's terms were clear the onus sat with the policyholder.
 - The policy terms and schedule clearly set out policy limits – so even if the value of the item had changed over time – he wasn't persuaded it would be fair or reasonable to direct Accredited to make a settlement outside of these terms. And overall, Accredited's settlement was fair.

Mrs W disagreed so the complaint has been passed to me for an Ombudsman's 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.

Having done so, I'm not upholding this complaint. I'll explain why.

In this case there's no dispute that Accredited has accepted Mrs W's claim. The key dispute here concerns the amount of settlement it has provided.

So, I'll begin with the policy terms.

Mrs W has quoted some of these herself which I'll touch on. Under the definition of "Valuables" it says:

"Important

You need to tell us about (to specify) any valuables which individually are worth more than £2,000. Any valuables which individually are worth more than this amount that you haven't told us about and aren't itemised in your policy schedule won't be insured.

The "worth" of a valuable is the cost of replacing that valuable."

Mrs W has specified her bracelet as a valuable on her policy. And it's evident the "worth" of the valuable is determined by the cost of replacing that particular item.

Within the policy terms, under "Contents cover" it says "*The amounts shown below are the most we will pay.*"

It goes on to list various covers, including "Specified valuables" for which it says:

"...we will pay up to the amount shown in your schedule."

And under the optional contents cover for specified personal possessions away from the property it similarly says "*The amounts shown below are the most we will pay.*"

It again goes on to list various covers – including “*Specified personal possessions*” for which it says:

“If you have specified any personal possessions (including personal belongings, gadgets or valuables), these limits will be shown in your schedule.”

I think it's clear from all of these terms that the policy schedule sets out the most Accredited will ever be required to pay in line with the policy.

I've reviewed Mrs W's policy schedule – and this clearly says her item's value is £3,600.

So, on its face, it strikes me that £3,600 is the most Mrs W would ever obtain from the policy for a claim for that item. I note Mrs W has said no clause existed which permitted a fixed cap in these circumstances but for the above reasons, I have to disagree with her.

There's no dispute here that Mrs W bought her bracelet in October 2024 for £3,600.

Accredited's initial offer may have caused confusion as Mrs W appears to have interpreted its offer of £2,844 as a valuation of the item. While I appreciate this matter has moved on, I thought it may be helpful to highlight here Accredited appears to have started with the settlement value of £3,600 but reduced this as it said it would be able to replace a £3,600 bracelet for the lower sum using its own provider. So, while there's no need for me to discuss this further, I would highlight I'm not persuaded this reflects Accredited made a mistake with its valuation – and instead it appears to have taken Mrs W's evidence on face value.

I've also been provided with Accredited's jeweller's valuation that is from July 2025 and states this would be worth £6,330. Mrs W has also indicated her own jeweller provided a similar valuation to this sum.

So, it seems clear to me that Mrs W's bracelet is worth more than the sum she insured it for. I have sympathy for her that at the time she took the cover for the item it was correctly insured. And it appears the quick moving nature of the value of gold and diamonds may have led to its sudden value change.

Under the heading “*Proof of value and ownership*” the policy says:

“The value of items such as jewellery, watches, works of art, curios and collections often varies independently of inflation. You should make sure these items are insured for the correct amount at all times...”

I think the terms are clear that the responsibility lies with the policyholder to ensure the sum insured is correct. So, in this case, simply, the onus sits fully with Mrs W to ensure the sum she's taken meets her needs.

I've taken into account all of Mrs W's arguments and I understand she feels it would've been right for Accredited to reach out to her in light of fluctuations in gold or diamond prices. But it doesn't have this obligation, nor have I seen anything to indicate it has suggested it would take on this responsibility on her behalf. I also note Mrs W's references to previous final decisions issued by this Service. The references provided do not appear accurate as these do not appear to correlate to a decision on our database. But in any case, each of our decisions are made on their own merits – and that's what I've done here.

For the above reasons, I'm satisfied that Accredited has provided a fair settlement for this claim in line with the policy terms and I will not interfere with this.

My final decision

I'm not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs W to accept or reject my decision before 3 March 2026.

Jack Baldry
Ombudsman