

The complaint

Ms B complains that PROPEL HOLDINGS (UK) LIMITED trading as Quidmarket lent to her three times when she could not afford to repay them. Ms B says that it did not carry out the right checks.

What happened

Loan 1 was taken on 8 October 2024 and was for £300. This was to be repaid by six equal monthly instalments of £93.45. This loan was repaid early on 28 October 2024.

Loan 2 was taken on 4 February 2025 (over three months later) and was for £475. This was to be repaid by six equal monthly instalments of £149.31 and was repaid early on 26 May 2025.

Loan 3 was taken on 9 June 2025 (two weeks later) and was for £600. This was to be repaid by six equal monthly instalments of £184.91. When the final response letter following Ms B's complaint was received by her in late November 2025, it said that she'd paid £739.64 to date and still owed a balance.

After Ms B had referred her complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service, one of our investigators looked at it all and did not think that Quidmarket had done anything wrong. Ms B disagreed and the unresolved complaint was 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.

Quidmarket needed to make sure that it didn't lend irresponsibly. In practice, what this means is that it needed to carry out proportionate checks to be able to understand whether any lending was sustainable for Ms B before providing it.

Our website sets out what we typically think about when deciding whether a lender's checks were proportionate. And I've used this approach to help me decide her complaint.

Generally, we think it's reasonable for a lender's checks to be less thorough – in terms of how much information it gathers and what it does to verify that information – in the early stages of a lending relationship. But we might think it needed to do more if, for example, a borrower's income was low, the amount lent was high, or the information the lender had – such as a significantly impaired credit history – suggesting the lender needed to know more about a prospective borrower's ability to repay.

Ms B has said that the information she gave to Quidmarket was accurate. So, I don't consider that the facts are in dispute. The figures are in the FRL which both parties have and so I do not set the figures out again here.

For each loan, Quidmarket obtained payslips so that it was knew what Ms B's income was after tax. I am satisfied that this was the most detailed check Quidmarket could have done.

When Ms B applied for Loan 1, she had told Quidmarket she was living at home with her parents. And so, her declared 'rent' cost being low would have been understandable as it's not likely that Ms B would have been paying full market rent to her parents. Added to which,

Quidmarket would have factored in the low risk to Ms B of rent arrears, or inability to pay priority bills. It would have recognised that the risk of Ms B not being able to repay its loan was lower than people living in private rented or mortgaged accommodation. I consider this a fair and reasonable approach.

For each application Quidmarket also carried out a credit check the results of each have been sent to us and I have reviewed them.

Loan 1

At Loan 1, the credit search results from Quidmarket show that Ms B had £3,916 of debt overall, of which £338 was on one credit card and Ms B had loans amounting to £3,604. There were no records of late payments, delinquency, insolvencies and no judgment debts. Ms B had credit commitments for four loans plus the card and the loans added up to total repayments of £382 a month. The card at 3% minimum repayment was costing her about £10. So, in total that was around £392 each month to cover her debts.

But in fact, the Income and Expenditure (I&E) calculations carried out by Quidmarket used a higher figure of £665. And by doing that had built in a margin or a buffer which I consider fair. Using the figures it had, it calculated that Ms B had £408 a month left over with which to pay down the new loan. I consider that Quidmarket carried out proportionate checks, lent fairly and I do not uphold the complaint about Loan 1.

Loan 2

When Ms B applied for Loan 2 several months later, she had declared she was a 'homeowner' but the credit search Quidmarket carried out searched the electoral roll as well and her address had not changed. So, I consider it likely Quidmarket recognised the low rent cost declared by Ms B was for the same reasons as before. And in fact, at Loan 3, Ms B was at the same address and had declared she was living at home. So, what I've said before about a lender's approach to applicants living at home applies to Loans 2 and 3 as well.

I have reviewed the credit search Quidmarket carried out at Loan 2. Ms B's overall debt had increased to just under £8,700 of which £4,170 were loans and £3,903 was debt on revolving credit accounts (meaning credit cards/store cards and mail order type accounts). Ms B had monthly loan commitment costs of around £600 plus credit card minimum repayments of around £117 a month. Two of the loans looked close to being paid off. And Ms B had no adverse data on her record at all.

The I&E Quidmarket carried out showed that Ms B had around £388 left over which was enough to repay the loan which was for a short term. I consider that Quidmarket carried out proportionate checks, lent fairly and I do not uphold the complaint about Loan 2.

Loan 3

At Loan 3, the credit search Quidmarket carried out and reviewed by me showed that Ms B's overall debt had reduced a little, and her monthly credit commitment costs had gone down. Ms B's income (payslip verified) had increased and she was living with her parents. The I&E Quidmarket did showed that Ms B had around £741 a month left over with which to repay the loan.

I have reviewed the credit search Quidmarket did and seen that earlier in the year Ms B had experienced some problem repaying two of her existing loans – one which was costing her £122 a month and the other £149 a month. A loan she'd taken in December 2024 was in an arrangement to pay and had been from the beginning. And Ms B was also in an arrangement to pay for another loan which was meant to be costing her £97 a month.

So, none of this was ideal. But as I have said earlier, Ms B's overall debt had reduced, her income had increased and the disposable income which looked to have been a fair and reasonable calculation based on what Quidmarket knew about Ms B was £741 a month. That was enough for a lender such as Quidmarket – used to lending to individuals with some

adverse data on their records – to consider that Ms B had enough to pay her debts down and to afford her new loan 3.

I do not uphold the complaint about Loan 3.

I've also considered whether Quidmarket acted unfairly or unreasonably in any other way and whether the relationship might have been unfair under section 140A of the Consumer Credit Act 1974.

However, for the reasons I've already given, I don't think it lent irresponsibly to Ms B or otherwise treated her unfairly in relation to this matter. I haven't seen anything to suggest that Section 140A would, given the facts of this complaint, lead to a different outcome here.

My final decision

My final decision is I do not uphold the complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms B to accept or reject my decision before 13 April 2026.

Rachael Williams
Ombudsman