

The complaint

The estate of Mr F complains NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY caused or contributed to delays in the transfer of an ISA belonging to Mr F.

What happened

Mr F sadly passed away in August last year. He'd appointed his daughter as one of two attorneys under a power of attorney prior to that. She had asked a business who I'll refer to as B throughout the rest of this decision to transfer an ISA he held with them to NatWest in August 2024. There were multiple delays and the transfer didn't go through until November 2024.

Mr F's attorney complained to NatWest and to B saying that the multiple delays had caused distress and inconvenience and had also resulted in a loss of interest.

NatWest looked into the complaint and initially said it had done nothing wrong and that Mr F should contact B. NatWest then offered £50 in compensation having accepted that it hadn't replied to emails it had received from Mr F and having agreed to pay backdated interest. NatWest looked into the matter again after Mr F complained that backdated interest hadn't been credited to his account. NatWest offered £150 in compensation for the delay in paying the backdated interest and confirmed that the interest – at 4.5% - had now been paid.

I'm satisfied that this was a secondary complaint, so I've not taken that £150 into account.

B also looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. B said that the reason why the transfer failed on multiple occasions was because NatWest kept on abandoning the transfer request before it had had a chance to complete the request. In other words, B blamed NatWest.

Mr F wasn't happy with either of the responses from the businesses. So he complained to our service with the help of his attorney. They asked for Mr F's complaint to be considered as one.

One of our investigators looked into the complaint against NatWest and another looked into the complaint against B. The investigator who looked into the complaint against NatWest didn't think the £50 that B had originally offered went far enough.

The other investigator – who looked into Mr F's attorney's complaint against B – said that they thought B could and should have investigated what was going wrong sooner and that had they done so the issue would likely have been resolved sooner. So, they recommended B pay £150 in compensation.

B didn't agree with our investigator's recommendation. B said that the delay was down to NatWest abandoning requests before it was able to pick up the case, so was something outside its control.

Mr F's attorney didn't think the compensation offered was adequate given the amount of distress her father had been caused over an extensive period. She also said she believed

she was due compensation for the amount of time she'd spent chasing this up.

Shortly after receiving our investigator's views Mr F passed away. Both complaints were referred to an ombudsman for decision – once we'd received proof of grant of probate. They've both since been passed to me.

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.

Earlier on this month I issued two provisional decisions – one in relation to this complaint and one in relation to the complaint against B. In those provisional decisions I said that if only one business had been involved I would have awarded £600 in compensation given the impact this had on Mr F. I also said that I was satisfied that NatWest had a bigger role overall to play – it wasn't giving B enough time to pick up the transfer request and it could and should have done more sooner. So, I said I was minded to require NatWest to pay £400 compensation – less the amounts it's already paid – and to require B to pay £200 in compensation. Everyone involved was invited to comment on my provisional decisions.

NatWest and B accepted. Mr F's attorney didn't, saying that they thought I should require each business to pay £600 in compensation. In other words, a total of £1,200 in compensation evenly split. They explained why with reference to impact.

In response to Mr F's attorney's comments, I sent a copy of our guidance on awards including an example of a case on our website which was similar – but more serious – in relation to which we said an award of £1,000 would be appropriate. I said I didn't think a total of £1,200 in compensation would be appropriate bearing that in mind and had split liability in part because Mr F's attorney wanted an independent view of which bank was more to blame.

Putting things right

Having considered everything, I remain of the view that requiring NatWest to pay £400 in compensation less the £50 it has already paid is a fair outcome. So, that's the award I'm going to make.

My final decision

My final decision is that I'm upholding this complaint and requiring NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY to pay the estate of Mr F £400 in compensation less the £50 it has already paid

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask the estate of Mr F to accept or reject my decision before 17 March 2026.

Nicolas Atkinson
Ombudsman