

The complaint

Ms K complains that Clydesdale Financial Services Limited trading as Barclays Partner Finance (“Barclays”) have recorded a default on her credit file after she had cleared the outstanding debt and are refusing to correct it.

What happened

The details of this complaint are well-known to both parties, so I won’t repeat them again 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.

I’m aware that I’ve summarised this complaint above in less detail than it may merit. No discourtesy is intended by this. Instead, I’ve focussed on what I think are the key issues here. Our rules allow me to do this. This simply reflects the informal nature of our service as a free alternative to the courts.

If there’s something I’ve not mentioned, it isn’t because I’ve ignored it. I haven’t. I’m satisfied I don’t need to comment on every individual argument to be able to reach what I think is the right outcome. I will, however, refer to those crucial aspects which impact my decision.

Lastly, I would add that where the information I’ve got is incomplete, unclear or contradictory, I’ve to base my decision on the balance of probabilities.

After careful consideration I’ve come to the same conclusion as our investigator and for broadly the same reasons.

I’ve decided that I won’t be asking Barclays to do anything else in relation to this complaint as:

- From the information I’ve considered from both parties, I’m satisfied that Barclays correctly applied the default and didn’t do anything wrong.
- Credit reference agencies (CRAs) hold a range of information in relation to how an individual has maintained their credit and service/utility accounts. This information is gathered together from what external companies report to the CRAs, and public sources of information such as the electoral roll and court judgements.
- From the evidence I’ve seen, Barclays correctly issued the Default Notice to Ms K although I appreciate that Ms K has told us she didn’t receive it. However, as our investigator pointed out, we have been provided evidence that the Default Notice dated 20 August 2025 was sent to the correct address.

- The Default Notice clearly points out that payment of the outstanding debt was due before 22 September 2025, and that Ms K should allow five working days for processing. So, this meant that to guarantee the payment cleared before the deadline, payment should be made by 16 September 2025. As Ms K didn't make the payment until 19 September 2025, it appears that the funds didn't clear by the deadline. And so, Barclays correctly defaulted the account on 21 September 2025.
- Barclays have a legal responsibility to ensure it accurately reports information to the CRAs in relation to how its customers have maintained their credit. So, in this case, how Ms K has managed her loan account.
- Where a lender defaults a customer's account, payments would still be expected in-line with the agreement. The account would remain active until the balance is repaid, or until the debt is sold.
- I'm only able to direct businesses to put things right for consumers where I find that it has made a mistake or acted unfairly, which isn't the case here.

On balance, I don't think Barclays did anything wrong when it provided the information that it did to the CRA's as it was accurately reporting information about the current status of Ms K's debt, which it was legally required to do. I appreciate this will be very disappointing for Ms K as I can see she feels strongly about this matter and has provided some sensitive and personal information regarding her health and circumstances which I'm sorry to hear about and hope improves. But I hope she'll understand the reasons for my decision and that she'll at least feel her concerns have been listened to.

I know this isn't the outcome Ms K hoped for. But for the reasons given above, I'm not intending to ask Barclays to do anything further to put things right.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint against Clydesdale Financial Services Limited trading as Barclays Partner Finance.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms K to accept or reject my decision before 19 March 2026.

Paul Hamber
Ombudsman