

The complaint

Mr G complains that Sky UK Limited rejected his claim for a refund in respect of a tablet which he returned unused.

What happened

Mr G inadvertently ordered a tablet from Sky when making other purchases funded by a regulated finance agreement. He called Sky straightaway and was advised the order had been placed so could not be stopped, but he should reject the tablet when delivery was made. That would mean the tablet was returned to Sky. He agreed, but the tablet was delivered and not rejected. Mr G then returned the tablet, but Sky says it did not receive it back.

Mr G says he followed the procedure set out by Sky on its website and he used a prepaid returns label provided by Sky. As he was unable to resolve the matter with Sky he brought a complaint to this service. It was considered by one of our investigators who didn't recommend it be upheld.

She examined the evidence provided by both parties along with the Royal Mail tracking information and established that the parcel had been sent to a national distribution centre where it had been signed for, but this did not show that the parcel had been received by Sky. Our investigator also noted that she had not seen any supporting evidence to show that Sky had provided the label used by Mr G to return the tablet. Nor could she identify the address as one used by Sky as part of its returns process. She concluded there was insufficient evidence to show that Sky had received the tablet and so she did not think it had done anything wrong.

Mr G didn't agree and asked that the matter be considered by an ombudsman.

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.

When the evidence is incomplete, inconclusive or contradictory as some of it is here – I've reached my outcome on the balance of probabilities – that is, what I consider likely to have happened given the available evidence and the wider circumstances.

I want to acknowledge that I've summarised the events of the complaint. I don't intend any discourtesy by this – it just reflects the informal nature of our service. I also want to assure Mr G and Sky that I've reviewed everything on file. If I don't comment on something, it's not because I haven't considered it. It's because I've concentrated on what I think are the key issues. Our powers allow me to do this.

I have every sympathy with Mr G but I do not consider I can uphold his complaint. I will explain why.

Mr G made an error and added the tablet to his purchase list and then it wasn't removed before the order was placed. When he realised this soon after he called Sky, but the order process had been set in motion and so the call handler was unable to cancel the tablet. She advised Mr G to reject it when the delivery was attempted. However, for some reason this did not happen and Mr G took delivery of the tablet.

I understand Mr G didn't call Sky again to clarify what he needed to do to return the tablet. It seems he made use of guidance online and the tablet was sent back using a prepaid label. I appreciate Mr G believed he was doing as Sky wished, but the label he has supplied to this service does not show an address which is an authorised returns address used by Sky. It seems the parcel went to a distribution centre and did not find its way back to Sky.

Sky gave Mr G the correct advice when he called and this was not followed. I have not seen any evidence that it provided the label he used and I cannot see what Sky has done wrong. It supplied the tablet as ordered and it has not got it back. As such it is entitled to charge Mr G for that tablet.

I appreciate that Mr G is now required to pay for a tablet he doesn't have, but I cannot say that was a result of the actions of Sky. It is a regrettable situation, but I cannot say that Sky should bear the cost.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr G to accept or reject my decision before 7 May 2026.

Ivor Graham
Ombudsman