

## **complaint**

Mr A is unhappy about a credit card account with Vanquis Bank Limited.

## **background**

Mr A opened a credit card account with Vanquish. But he says Vanquish gave him the credit card when he had other loans and cards. He got into financial difficulty and had to keep borrowing more to make ends meet. He now has a debt management plan with a third party. Mr A wants Vanquish to refund the interest and charges it applied. And he wants any adverse information removing from his credit file.

Vanquish said it didn't think it'd acted irresponsibly when it gave Mr A the credit card. It'd taken into account his personal circumstances to establish an appropriate level of credit. At the time Mr A said he was employed full time and had a good level of income. Vanquish said Mr A had confirmed his details during the call when his card was approved. And it hadn't been aware of any reason why it shouldn't have granted Mr A his card.

Mr A wasn't satisfied with the bank's response. So he contacted our service and our adjudicator looked into the matter. She was sorry to hear about Mr A's financial difficulties. But she didn't think Vanquis had lent irresponsibly to Mr A. The reports from credit agencies didn't show any concerns or excessive debts at the time Mr A applied for the card. There hadn't been any reports of missed payments and Mr A said he had a reasonable level of income.

Mr A didn't agree. He already owed £2500 when Vanquish gave him the account. And they asked for a household income figure - it should've asked for more information about his individual income details. So he's asked for an ombudsman's final decision.

## **my findings**

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

I can understand Mr A's frustration. He's experienced some financial difficulties and he's concerned Vanquish gave him a credit card when it should've rejected his application. So I've looked carefully at everything he and Vanquish has said.

Mr A says he already had a number of other credit cards and loans when he applied for the card. And he's asked for refunds of interest and charges on a number of them. I appreciate the situation that Mr A finds himself in. But our role is to look at the circumstances of this individual complaint and not judge it against decisions involving other loans or cards.

When Mr A applied for the card he provided income details and said he had full time employment. Although his stated annual income may have included his fiancé's income as well, Mr A has acknowledged that was only a small amount. And Vanquish carried out its usual credit checks to determine a suitable level of credit to offer.

Mr A says he owed some £2500 at the time but the credit searches didn't show any history of missed payments or financial problems. And so Vanquish felt it appropriate to offer an initial credit limit of £500 on the account. Based on the information it'd received, from Mr A and the credit agencies, it felt that was an affordable limit.

And I think it's reasonable for Vanquish to rely on the information given to it by Mr A. The figures were not unrealistic. And the credit checks showed no concerns. So at the time it offered Mr A the credit card I can't really say Vanquish did anything wrong.

Once it became aware of Mr A's financial difficulties I would expect Vanquish to act sympathetically and positively. I understand it has now accepted a repayment plan that doesn't add any further interest to the outstanding balance. And I think that's fair and reasonable.

Mr A would like Vanquish to remove any markers from his credit report. But Vanquish has a responsibility to report Mr A's details to credit agencies. It has to provide a true reflection of how the account has been managed. So I can't ask it to alter what its reported.

I realise Mr A will be disappointed by this outcome. But, based on everything I've seen, I can't say Vanquish acted unfairly by offering Mr A the credit card account. And its responded sympathetically to his changing circumstances. So I won't be asking it do to anything more.

### **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 A to accept or reject my decision before 12 April 2018.

Andrew Mason  
**ombudsman**