

complaint

Mrs D complains that The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc made a number of mistakes with her loan account. She says that RBS dealt with her complaint poorly, causing her stress which has aggravated her serious medical condition.

Background

Mrs D had an outstanding debt to RBS and was experiencing financial difficulties. RBS had agreed a repayment plan and to write off part of the debt in goodwill gestures. But the goodwill reductions were not applied to the account. Mrs D was sent conflicting and confusing letters from RBS about the amount she was owed and the debt was passed to a debt collection agent.

Mrs D had to spend a lot of time seeking to resolve the problems with her account and she says that the stress this caused her worsened her medical condition. RBS also made mistakes when it wrote to Mrs D about a refund she was due from a savings account she held with the bank

The adjudicator agreed that RBS had made a series of mistakes and provided Mrs D with poor customer service. But RBS wrote off Mrs D's debt and by mistake gave her an additional amount of several thousand pounds which it has confirmed that Mrs D can keep. The adjudicator concluded that RBS had done enough to compensate Mrs D for its actions.

In response Mrs D disagreed. She said that RBS' actions had seriously aggravated her degenerative disease. She said the amount RBS had paid would only cover the expenses she incurred trying to resolve the complaint. She asked that RBS pay her more compensation.

my findings

I have considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

RBS has admitted it gave both Mrs D and its debt collection agents incorrect information about how much money was owed. It has also admitted it made mistakes with the refund from her savings account. I find RBS provided extremely poor customer service to Mrs D which meant she had to repeatedly contact it to resolve the matter. Given that Mrs D suffers from a serious medical condition it is understandable that Mrs D says this caused her a great deal of stress and upset.

I appreciate that Mrs D has provided this service with information about the impact of stress on her illness. And I understand her argument that RBS should provide additional compensation. But I would not have awarded Mrs D more money than the total amount that RBS has paid to her – had RBS not already made the offer. This is because RBS has written off Mrs D's debt and has additionally given her several thousand pounds. Even considering the exceptional circumstances of Mrs D's case I find that RBS is not required to make an additional payment to her.

my final decision

My decision is that I do not require RBS to do more than it already has to compensate Mrs D for its mistakes.

Sarah Brooks
ombudsman