

## **complaint**

H, a limited company, complains about the time taken by National Westminster Bank Plc to open its business account. H is represented by its director, who I will call Ms Y. It asks for compensation for costs and financial loss and an apology.

## **background**

Initially, Ms Y operated her business as a sole trader. In 2006 she started to trade through H. Ms Y arranged a meeting with NatWest in April 2015 to discuss banking facilities and open an account for H. When she arrived no-one was available. It took some time to re-arrange the meeting. The account was opened in August 2015.

Ms Y says a service provider would only process payments through an account in the name of a limited company. H lost business of about £2,000 due to the delays in opening its account.

The adjudicator recommended that the complaint should be upheld. He said NatWest had not dealt with the matter well. NatWest agreed to pay £200 compensation for the difficulties in arranging a meeting, which the adjudicator said was fair and reasonable. Ms Y had not provided evidence that H had financial losses due to NatWest's error. So it would not be reasonable to require NatWest to pay compensation for financial losses.

H did not agree. On its behalf, Ms Y said H's losses were much greater than £200. She said she would send evidence to support this.

## **my findings**

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. Where the evidence is incomplete, inconclusive or contradictory, I reach my decision on the balance of probabilities – in other words, what I consider is most likely to have happened in light of the available evidence and the wider circumstances.

Ms Y arranged a meeting with NatWest, but when she arrived found there was no record of the meeting and no-one available to see her. Ms Y had difficulty re-arranging the meeting. This delayed opening an account for H. NatWest agreed to pay £200 compensation for the inconvenience this caused. I find this fair and reasonable in the circumstances.

Ms Y says she has evidence that H suffered financial loss due to the delay in opening its account. Despite a reminder from the adjudicator, this has not been provided. I am not persuaded from the evidence available to me that the delay in opening H's account caused it financial loss. In the circumstances, I don't think it would be reasonable to require NatWest to pay further compensation to H.

**my final decision**

My decision is that I uphold this complaint. I order National Westminster Bank Plc to pay £200 to H.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask H to accept or reject my decision before 9 November 2015.

Ruth Stevenson  
**ombudsman**