

complaint

Mr J complains that Santander UK Plc acted unfairly and unreasonably when dealing with his mortgage application. He wants to find out why his application wasn't successful.

background

Mr J wanted a mortgage from Santander, and said that his application wasn't successful, but was told that if he increased the deposit available from 5% of the property's value to 10%, it would be approved. Mr J increased his deposit and got a mortgage offer, but Santander then refused to proceed. Mr J said that he was told that the refusal was connected to CIFAS, a fraud prevention service, but CIFAS said that it held no entry about Mr J in its databases for the address he'd supplied to it. A credit reference agency also confirmed that there were no CIFAS markers against Mr J in its records.

Mr J complained to Santander. It said that it couldn't provide detailed information, but he could contact CIFAS for more information. Santander explained that mortgage offers could be withdrawn at any time if additional checks were required.

Mr J complained to us. The adjudicator's view was that the mortgage offer made it clear that it could be withdrawn under certain conditions, and Santander was entitled to carry out checks, even after making a mortgage offer. She said that it was fair and reasonable in the circumstances for Santander to withdraw its offer, and this service wouldn't ask Santander to give Mr J a mortgage. The adjudicator also explained that Santander didn't have to give a detailed answer about its refusal to give Mr J a mortgage, but she was satisfied that its refusal wasn't for an unlawful reason, such as discrimination. The complaint wasn't upheld.

Mr J disagreed. He said Santander had lied and said that there was a reason connected to CIFAS for its refusal, when CIFAS had said otherwise.

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've had the benefit of seeing all the evidence available in Mr J's case, including confidential information that I can't disclose to him. Having reviewed this information, I'm satisfied that the reason why Santander withdrew its mortgage offer had nothing to do with Mr J's race or religion but was due to further checks it carried out after making the mortgage offer.

Under the terms and conditions of the mortgage offer, it can be withdrawn in certain circumstances. The information Santander received after making the offer in my view met the criteria to allow it to withdraw the offer. I appreciate Mr J has tried to find out from third parties what the information is; I suggest that he may wish to discuss further with CIFAS and third parties to see if they can assist him further. But Santander doesn't have to give more information about its refusal and it's fair and reasonable in the circumstances for it to refuse to do so and simply withdraw its offer.

my final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold the complaint. Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr J to accept or reject my decision before 26 April 2019.

Claire Sharp
ombudsman