

complaint

Mr M complains that The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc ("RBS") wrongly declined a payment that he made with his debit card.

background

Mr M complains that, having moved £40,000 into his card account, he attempted to make a £40,000 debit card payment at a bookmakers' to cover a gambling transaction but this was declined.

Further attempts to make the payment (or pay a smaller amount) also did not succeed, and Mr M says that this caused him losses of over £14,000 as the bet he had intended to place would have won.

RBS says that some of Mr M's payment attempts did not go through because they were over the relevant payment limit for the merchant involved, and that others triggered fraud prevention systems which blocked them. It did not accept that it was liable to compensate Mr M for his loss.

As things weren't settled, Mr M brought his complaint to this service where one of our investigators looked into it. From the evidence, the investigator was satisfied that the reasons RBS had given for the declined transactions were accurate. The investigator did not feel RBS had done anything wrong and so did not recommend that the complaint should be upheld.

Mr M did not agree and said he was still not satisfied about the reasons behind the transactions being declined. He asked for his complaint to be reviewed by an ombudsman, as he was entitled to do.

my findings

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

Mr M initially attempted to make a £40,000 payment at the bookmakers', but this was declined because it exceeded a limited in place between the bookmakers and their bank. RBS would not have been privy to that limit.

When that did not go through Mr M quickly tried again, for £20,000. That didn't go through, for the same reason as before.

Mr M then tried successive transactions of £10,000 and £5,000 which triggered fraud prevention systems at RBS and did not go through. Given the overall circumstances, I am not persuaded that this action by RBS was unreasonable.

After that, Mr M spoke with RBS fraud team and – having followed its instructions – tried again to make the £40,000 payment. It did not go through – again, because it exceeded the bookmakers' limit with their own bank. The same thing happened on Mr M's final attempt that day. But this was not in RBS's control.

I understand why Mr M feels very strongly that the problems he encountered caused him to lose out on the opportunity to make a significant amount of money, but I don't consider that this was RBS's fault. It follows that I find RBS is not liable to compensate him in the matter.

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 M to accept or reject my decision before 22 August 2016.

Jane Hingston
ombudsman