

## **complaint**

Mr C complains Barclays Bank PLC (trading as Barclaycard) increased the limit on his credit card without his knowledge. He considers by doing this it led to him falling into financial difficulties.

## **background**

Between 2006 and 2008 Barclaycard increased the credit limit on Mr C's credit card account four times. The increase was from £3,500 to £9,900.

In March 2010, Mr C began to struggle to meet the monthly minimum payments. In April 2011, he sought help from a third party. An agreement was made with Barclaycard for the repayment of the debt at £49.08 per month from May 2011. At this stage Barclaycard also suspended all interest and charges to the account. In October 2011, the debt was passed to Barclaycard's recoveries department, and in November 2011 the debt was sold to an external debt collection agency.

The adjudicator did not recommend the complaint should be upheld. He was unable to agree that Barclaycard increased the limit on Mr C's credit card irresponsibly or without telling him.

Mr C disagrees. He says Barclaycard has put him in debt for the rest of his life and it should have taken into account that he was only making minimum payments and his age.

## **my findings**

I have considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. Having done so, I have reached the same conclusion as the adjudicator, and for broadly the same reasons.

I am sorry to hear Mr C is in financial difficulty. But for me to consider that Barclaycard lent irresponsibly to him I need to consider the situation at the time of the increases. And there is nothing in what I have seen which suggests Mr C's financial difficulties should have been foreseen by Barclaycard.

Mr C says the fact that he was only making minimum payments should have indicated he couldn't afford the increases. But as the adjudicator has explained many people only make minimum payments and don't fall into financial difficulty. And he was able to maintain the minimum payments for over a year after the last increase suggesting increasing the credit limit wasn't irresponsible lending. Mr C also says his age – he is in his sixties – should have been considered. Again I don't consider this should have suggested he would have fallen into difficulty.

Mr C made variable payments throughout the time when the increases occurred and never made a payment below the minimum payment. This suggests to me he read his statements carefully. I therefore consider it most likely he did realise his credit limit had been increased as this appeared on each statement. And he didn't have to use the credit given to him. If he had concerns about its affordability he could have asked for the limit to be reduced.

I don't consider Barclaycard increased Mr C's credit limit irresponsibly.

## **my final decision**

My decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 23 January 2015.

Nicola Wood  
**ombudsman**