

complaint

Mrs C complains that Vanquis Bank Limited was irresponsible to increase her credit card limit.

our initial conclusions

Our adjudicator did not recommend the complaint should be upheld. He did not find it unreasonable that Vanquis had increased Mrs C's credit limit. He was satisfied that her account had been reasonably well-managed and that she had the option to reject the increased limit.

Mrs C responded to say, in summary, that she had spent over her credit limit and made late payments before Vanquis increased the limit. She said that was contrary to its own terms and conditions for when credit limit increases should be allowed.

my final decision

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

I acknowledge that in the period immediately prior to her credit limit being increased, Mrs C went over her credit limit twice and three of her payments were late. However, because in each case the situation was quickly remedied, and Mrs C often paid more than the minimum payment, I can't say Vanquis was wrong to increase her credit limit. I have seen the criteria to which Mrs C refers, but they are guidelines for customers who want to increase their limits and not conditions to which Vanquis must adhere. Indeed, Vanquis also sent Mrs C a letter about the new limit before it was implemented, and Mrs C had the option to refuse the increase or not spend the higher amount.

However, I accept Mrs C says she is now in financial difficulties and Vanquis does have an obligation to respond positively and sympathetically. It has refunded over £100 and agreed several repayment plans with Mrs C, but as the plans have broken down each time, Mrs C's account is now with a debt collection agency. I don't consider Vanquis is obliged to do any more. **My decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.**

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mrs C either to accept or reject my decision before **7 March 2016**.

Amanda Williams

ombudsman at the Financial Ombudsman Service

The ombudsman may complete this section where appropriate – adding comments or further explanations of particular relevance to the case.

ombudsman notes

what is a final decision?

- A final decision by an ombudsman is our last word on a complaint. We send the final decision at the same time to both sides – the consumer and the financial business.
- Our complaints process involves various stages. It gives both parties to the complaint the opportunity to tell us their side of the story, provide further information, and disagree with our earlier findings – before the ombudsman reviews the case and makes a final decision.
- A final decision is the end of our complaints process. This means the ombudsman will not be able to deal with any further correspondence about the merits of the complaint.

what happens next?

- A final decision only becomes legally binding on the financial business if the consumer accepts it. To do this, the consumer should sign and date the acceptance card we send with the final decision – and return it to us before the date set out in the decision.
- If the consumer accepts a final decision before the date set out in the decision we will tell the financial business – it will then have to comply promptly with any instructions set out by the ombudsman in the decision.
- If the consumer does not accept a final decision before the date set out in the decision, neither side will be legally bound by it.