

complaint

Mrs W is unhappy that Vanquis Bank Limited won't remove adverse information from her credit file.

background

In October 2016, Mrs W made a payment towards her credit card balance. Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding between the parties, Mrs W made a payment that wasn't enough to cover the minimum payment for that month. Vanquis updated her credit file to reflect that this had happened.

Mrs W remained unaware that this had happened until April 2017 when she spoke to a different business with which she wanted to arrange a loan. That business performed a "soft" search of Mrs W's credit file to see if her application was likely to succeed. Unfortunately, it revealed that her application would most likely be declined by that business. As a result, Mrs W decided not to go ahead with an application.

Mrs W agrees that she didn't make her minimum payment at the correct time and that Vanquis isn't at fault for this. But she thinks that, given the circumstances of this late payment, Vanquis should make an exception. She's told us her normal practice when it comes to making payments towards her credit card debts is to do so *earlier* than necessary. And this missed payment results entirely from the miscommunication between her and Vanquis and doesn't in any way reflect her risk as a potential borrower. Mrs W thinks it would therefore be a common sense approach to remove this information from her credit file.

Our investigator looked at the complaint and thought Vanquis had handled things fairly. Mrs W disagreed with the investigator's opinion and so the complaint has been passed to me to make a final decision.

my findings

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. And having done so, I've come to the same conclusion as the investigator and for the same reasons.

From my understanding, the subscribers to a credit reference agency owe a mutual obligation to one another to record information accurately. Mrs W has pointed out that this information doesn't say anything meaningful about her riskiness as a potential creditor. And while that may be reasonable, it isn't for Vanquis Bank to determine what information would be considered significant by other lenders.

It's true that businesses sometimes do decide to amend information recorded on an individual's credit file in the way that she's requesting. But it's for each individual business to come to its own view on how it meets the obligations it owes to the other subscribers to the credit reference agency.

Overall, I don't think Vanquis has acted unfairly here and so I don't think it needs to amend Mrs W's credit file.

my final decision

For the reasons I've set out above, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs W to accept or reject my decision before 15 December 2017.

James Kimmitt
ombudsman