

complaint

Mr W complains that Vanquis Bank Limited blocked his credit card when he tried to make a payment to his account.

background

Mr W had recently taken out a Vanquis credit card. He used the card to buy some items. He then made a payment to the credit card account. Vanquis suspended Mr W's account and asked him for information to confirm the source of his payment. It said it would then be able to remove the block. Mr W couldn't understand why Vanquis had blocked his account. He says the bank's actions prevented him from using the card as a back-up payment method whilst on holiday.

Our adjudicator didn't think Vanquis had done anything wrong. He listened to Mr W's telephone conversation with Vanquis. The bank had explained what Mr W needed to do to have the block removed. Mr W had told Vanquis he'd send it the evidence it asked for to show the payment had come from his account. But he didn't go back to Vanquis, so the block stayed in place.

Mr W didn't accept the adjudicator's findings. He feels sure he would have gone back to Vanquis. And he's unhappy that Vanquis still hasn't unblocked the card. It wants to see a copy of the card he used to make payment, as well as his account statement.

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 understand why Mr W's frustrated with what happened. I think Vanquis could have done a better job of explaining why it needed the information about the payment source. It's an unfortunate fact that fraudsters sometimes use someone else's card details to make payments to credit card accounts. By the time the genuine cardholder realises what's happened, the fraudster might use the credit card to run up a significant debt.

This was the first payment Vanquis received on Mr W's account. So I can see why it took steps to ensure Mr W had genuinely made the payment, and that he possessed the card used to make it. I don't think there's anything particularly wrong in Vanquis doing this, as long as it told Mr W what it wanted and its request wasn't unreasonable or excessive.

I also understand why Mr W wasn't keen to send his bank and card information. He says his bank advised him against it. But like the adjudicator, I can't see there's anything to show Mr W called Vanquis back to explain this. And Mr W was aware of the block – and what he needed to do to remove it – before he went on holiday. I've listened to the telephone conversation between him and Vanquis.

I don't doubt it was disappointing for Mr W to be unable to use his Vanquis card when he was on holiday. But in the circumstances, I don't believe it would be right for me to require Vanquis to pay him compensation for this. Nor do I think I can fairly expect the bank to remove the block unless Mr W provides the evidence it's asked him for. As I understand it, Mr W doesn't have any outstanding balance on the Vanquis account. His payments were applied to the money he'd spent, and Vanquis has waived any residual interest. So all I can

really do is leave it for Mr W to decide whether, on reflection, he now wishes to provide the information to Vanquis in order that it removes the account block.

my final decision

For the reasons I've set out, 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 W to accept or reject my decision before 18 May 2015.

Niall Taylor
ombudsman