

The complaint

Mr B complains about delays and poor service from Clydesdale Bank Plc trading as Virgin Money when transferring an ISA to a new provider.

What happened

Mr B has explained that he was in the process of transferring his ISA from Virgin Money to another provider and on 19 November 2022 Mr B says he tried to contact Virgin Money to check the status of his account. But after waiting 40 minutes for an online chat Mr B says he was asked to call. But after waiting a further 30 minutes on hold, Mr B was told to call another number due to the type of ISA he held. Mr B says that after waiting on hold for a further 20 minutes his call was dropped so he had to call again.

Mr B complained and Virgin Money issued a final response on 20 December 2022. Virgin Money explained some issues with the transfer request had delayed it. Virgin Money advised the ISA transfer had been completed and paid Mr B £100 for the distress and inconvenience caused by the service provided.

In March 2023 Mr B referred his complaint to this service and it was passed to an investigator. Mr B explained that despite raising a complaint, Virgin Money had failed to respond. Our investigator forwarded a copy of Virgin Money's final response dated 20 December 2022. The investigator added that they thought Virgin Money had already paid a settlement that was fair.

Mr B asked to appeal and said inconsistencies in Virgin Money's final response made him think it related to another complaint he'd raised. In addition, Mr B said the £100 settlement didn't factor in the costs he'd incurred obtaining the help of a support worker to assist with the complaint. As Mr B asked to appeal, his complaint has been passed to me to make a decision.

What I've decided – and why

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

I'm aware I've summarised the events surrounding this complaint in less detail than the parties involved. No discourtesy is intended by my approach which reflects the informal nature of this service. I want to assure all parties I've read and considered everything on file. I'm satisfied I don't need to comment on every point raised to fairly reach my decision. And if I don't comment on something, it's not because I haven't considered it. It's because I've focused on what I think are the key issues. My approach is in line with the rules we operate under.

Mr B's complaint was made on the basis of the service he received on 19 November 2022 when he tried to contact Virgin Money to check the status of his ISA. Mr B has explained he spent several hours trying to speak with someone and that wait times were unreasonably

long. Calls were dropped and Mr B wasn't called back. I can understand why Mr B grew frustrated at the service provided and time taken.

Virgin Money investigated Mr B's complaint and accepted it had failed to provide a reasonable level of service. Mr B's told us that he confused the final response Virgin Money issued and thought it related to another complaint. But I'm satisfied the final response clearly sets out the circumstances of the complaint it was dealing with and explains why an award of £100 was made to Mr B. Whilst I've taken Mr B's comments into account, I haven't been persuaded the final response was unclear or misrepresented the circumstances of his case.

I've considered whether there are grounds to increase the award, especially taking Mr B's comments about his costs into account. But I haven't been persuaded that would be fair. Ultimately, Mr B raised a complaint and Virgin Money issued its final response around a month later. Whilst I appreciate Mr B may have paid support workers for additional time, I'm satisfied Virgin Money responded in good time as required when it issued its final response on 20 December 2022.

I understand my decision is likely to disappoint Mr B. But I'm satisfied that Virgin Money's offer of £100 in recognition of the distress and inconvenience caused is a fair and reasonable way to resolve his complaint. To put it another way, the settlement is very much in line with what I would've awarded had no offer been made. As I'm satisfied Virgin Money has already agreed a settlement that is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances I'm not telling it to do anything else.

My final decision

My decision is that Clydesdale Bank Plc trading as Virgin Money has already agreed a settlement that is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 18 October 2023.

Marco Manente
Ombudsman