

## The complaint

Ms C complains that The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc (RBS) didn't pay her the £200 account switching incentive payment it offered, causing her a loss of interest and inconvenience.

## What happened

Ms C wanted to switch her account to RBS and its website told her she was eligible for the switch offer and she applied. She said it took several weeks and her time and energy for the attempted switch. After a week she called RBS and was advised to wait and use the online chat, but it took days for a response. Ms C said she was eventually told her old bank had rejected the switch and it was for her to follow up, but she didn't think this should up to her.

Ms C brought her complaint to RBS. She said she had to put £1,250 in the account within 60 days as required and has lost potential interest on that money. She said she should be entitled to an extra £200 compensation on top of the £200 switch offer for all this trouble.

RBS responded to say Ms C requested the switch on 30 March, but this was rejected by her old bank the next day because of the type of her account. RBS said not all types of account are acceptable and so it wouldn't pay her the £200. However, RBS its delayed response was completely unacceptable and apologised and paid her £100 compensation.

Ms C was dissatisfied with RBS's response and said she should be paid a further £300 for the incentive payment and compensation for her inconvenience and upset. She referred her complaint to our service.

Our investigator didn't recommend that the complaint be upheld. He said a week passed without Ms C being told the outcome of her switch application and further days before she was told the reason for rejection, that her account is ineligible. He said RBS's service wasn't what it should have been, but the compensation paid to her for this was fair.

Ms C disagreed with the investigator and requested an ombudsman review her complaint. She said when she input her switch request into RBS's website the response was, '*Yes this account is available for switch.*' She said RBS has been misleading and lied. And she said she has lost potential interest on the deposited sum of £1,250.

## 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 was sorry to learn that Ms C's attempt to switch her bank account was unsuccessful, and to see the inconvenience she suffered. I've looked at the terms and conditions of RBS's switch offer and its handling of Ms C's application to see if it has treated her fairly.

Ms C did not receive the £200 switch offer which was represented as payable to applicants in seven days, and she has had to do all of the running around and chasing to find out why. RBS said it had made no error and had followed the correct process. It said it had provided her with the correct information, albeit following a delay.

I've seen RBS's records about Ms C's switch application, and it states, '*Old account not valid for account switch*'. From my review of the terms and conditions of the switch offer, Ms C wasn't eligible for the offer and so RBS does not need to pay her the £200 offer incentive.

RBS's website gave Ms C to understand her switch had been successful and so I can understand her frustration at being rejected for the switch offer. I don't think the message to which Ms C has referred was presented as RBS's final answer to her switch application. However, the inconvenience and delay of trying to discover what was happening impacted on Ms C. Ms C also mentioned the loss of interest from her old account on the £1,250 she had to transfer to RBS to comply with the terms and conditions of the switch offer.

I've considered the loss of interest to Ms C which would have been a very small sum alongside the inconvenience she was put to. I'm pleased RBS has apologised to her for the poor service it provided. I've taken into account the time and communications Ms C directed at this problem. Overall the delay was for a relatively short period and so her inconvenience and potential loss of interest was limited to that time.

In conclusion, I think the £100 compensation RBS has paid Ms C is about right for the impact its poor service had on her. This award is in line with others we have seen in similar circumstances to Ms C's. I realise she will be disappointed with this outcome, but I hope she understands the reasons.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons I have given it is my final decision that the complaint is not upheld.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms C to accept or reject my decision before 29 December 2023.

Andrew Fraser  
**Ombudsman**