

The complaint

Mr W complains that National Westminster Bank Plc declined to lend to him.

What happened

Mr W says that NatWest keeps declining applications for credit that he makes, and he feels this shows they have a vendetta against him. Mr W made a complaint to NatWest, and he asked to meet with their Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

NatWest did not uphold Mr W's complaint. They referred him to a previous letter they sent him on 8 July 2022, which informed Mr W that a recent loan application had been declined due to adverse data being found on his credit file during their credit reference search. They gave him reasons why an application may have been declined. NatWest said they did not have a vendetta against him, and he may be able to apply for further borrowing, but there is no way they can guarantee that they can accept a customer's application. Mr W brought his complaint to our service.

Our investigator did not uphold Mr W's complaint. He said NatWest has not made an error in declining to lend to him, and they explained the reasons for this. He said it is up to NatWest's CEO whether to meet with Mr W or not. Mr W asked for an ombudsman to review his complaint.

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've considered what Mr W has said about NatWest having a vendetta against him as they won't lend to him. But while it may seem that way to Mr W, NatWest have a responsibility to ensure any credit they lend to a customer is affordable and sustainable for them to repay. While Mr W may feel that he can afford to make repayments, it is a commercial decision for NatWest to make if they feel they can lend responsibly to a customer. This is not a process our service can interfere with as we can't ask NatWest to lend to a customer if they decline to do so.

Mr W has been given a reason that there is adverse information showing on his credit file and this is a reason that they weren't able to approve his borrowing. Mr W may wish to get a copy of his credit file, so he can see if any lenders are reporting incorrect negative information about how he has operated his account(s) with them. If there is any incorrect information on his credit file, then he should contact the lender involved and ask them to correct this.

Mr W should be aware that NatWest look at a range of factors in deciding whether to approve credit and the information on his credit file is just one of these factors. They need to be satisfied that they responsibly lend to a customer, so if they have data which suggests lending may be irresponsible, or unsustainable for a customer, then they will decline an application, but this doesn't mean they have a vendetta against Mr W or that they have done

anything wrong in declining a lending application. I know Mr W wants to discuss the issues with NatWest's CEO, but it would be the CEO's decision whether to meet with Mr W, so I can't say NatWest have made an error here. So it follows I don't require NatWest to do anything further.

My final decision

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 September 2023.

Gregory Sloanes
Ombudsman