

## **The complaint**

Mr N complains about how Barclays Bank UK PLC dealt with his financial difficulties.

## **What happened**

Mr N says he missed required loan repayments in 2021 due to him being abroad and in financial difficulties. He says Barclays didn't help him or offer any support but defaulted his account. Mr N would like the default removed and says he told Barclays he was intending to travel abroad.

Barclays says it agreed a payment holiday with Mr N in 2020 and agreed a repayment plan with him in December 2021. It doesn't accept being told Mr N was abroad but accepts it recorded a default too soon, when there was a plan in place. Barclays says Mr N didn't keep to the repayment plan and it became clear he was unable to afford any repayments. It has offered £100 compensation for the mistake but says the default would have been recorded at a later point in any event.

Mr N brought his complaint to us, and our investigator didn't uphold it. The investigator didn't think there any evidence Mr N told Barclays he was travelling abroad and didn't think he would have been able to avoid the default. The investigator thought the £100 compensation offer appropriate for that part of the complaint.

Mr N doesn't accept that view.

## **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.

Having done so I have come to the overall view that I don't uphold this complaint.

I have looked through Barclays records and I can't see any record of it being told that Mr N was intending to travel abroad. I'm satisfied in any event it was his responsibility, in line with the loan terms and conditions, to make any required monthly repayments.

Banks and building societies should treat customers in financial difficulties positively and sympathetically. I can see that in 2020 Barclays agreed a payment holiday with Mr N which no doubt would have helped him. I can also see that in 2021 Barclays agreed a repayment plan with Mr N, but he was unable to keep to it. So, I'm satisfied Barclays tried to help Mr N and did act positively and sympathetically to his position. I can also see that Barclays provided Mr N with details of organisations that may have been able to help him.

I accept, and there is no doubt, Barclays defaulted the account too soon. But I can see Barclays has fairly apologised for that mistake and offered what I think is a fair and reasonable compensation amount of £100. I don't think that mistake resulted in any financial loss to Mr N and don't think it had a significant impact. I say that as it's clear Mr N's account would have defaulted in any event as he didn't have enough income to afford the

repayments. So, I'm satisfied that Mr N may have benefited from the mistake as the default started about a year before it would have been registered. In those circumstances I don't propose to ask Barclays to remove the default and order it to change the date to the later date as that clearly will not benefit Mr N.

Overall, I'm satisfied that Barclays tried to help Mr N but that the default couldn't be avoided in these circumstances.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I don't uphold the main part of the complaint and that Barclays Bank UK PLC has made a fair and reasonable compensation order of £100 which it should now pay Mr N if it's not been paid.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr N to accept or reject my decision before 30 August 2023.

David Singh  
**Ombudsman**