

The complaint

Mr S complains that, when he switched his account to the Royal Bank of Scotland PLC (RBS), it failed to pay him the £175 incentive he thought was due to him.

What happened

Mr S applied online to switch his account to RBS in October 2022. Under the terms of RBS's switching accounts offer he expected to receive £175 incentive into his account. He didn't receive it and complained to RBS.

RBS explained that Mr S didn't receive the incentive because he only applied for a partial switch which meant that he didn't close his old account. Under the terms of the incentive offer, to be eligible for the payment Mr S needed to close his old account and switch all the payments from that account to his new RBS account.

On referral to the Financial Ombudsman Service our Adjudicator said that RBS had acted correctly as when Mr S made his application he opted not to close down his old account. This meant he did not qualify for the incentive payment as set out in the terms of the offer.

Mr S did not agree and the matter has been passed to me for further consideration.

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.

In October 2022 Mr S applied online to switch his accounts to RBS. This was in response to an incentive offered by RBS to pay £175 on a successful switching of accounts. I have seen the copy of the relevant page of the application which Mr S completed. To the question "*Would you like to close your account and transfer your balance?*", Mr S replied "No". Under the terms of the incentive which are set out in a clear document (i.e. not buried in a lot of small print), it says that:

"To get £175 you must:

(b) as part of your application, transfer a non-NatWest current account to your new eligible account (which includes closing your non-NatWest current account and moving all your payment instructions to your new eligible account).

So, as Mr S did not opt to close his old account, he isn't eligible to get the £175 incentive. And I've seen no evidence that Mr S made a mistake or did intend to close his old account.

So regrettably as Mr S did not apply to switch the account in line with the terms of the incentive offer I think that RBS acted appropriately. So I can't ask it to take any further action.

My final decision

I don't uphold the complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 9 November 2023.

Ray Lawley
Ombudsman