

## **P1-1 – Contract renewal and burden of proof (BT → EE migration) (22/08)**

### **Narrative Report**

I raised this case because a customer denied agreeing to a new contract after being moved to EE, and I needed to establish what specific evidence was required to prove enforceability before holding him to Early Termination Charges.

**Daniel Mark Jackson (22/08 13:44):** "He's considering cancelling and has been informed about HTTC, but he claims he never agreed to a new contract. What do we need to provide to prove that the contract is enforceable?" <sup>1</sup>

The initial advice suggested simply checking for a call recording, so I challenged the underlying assumption that the customer bears the responsibility to disprove the contract, suggesting the onus of proof should lie with EE.

**Daniel Mark Jackson (22/08 14:08):** "Is it not for ee to prove that he is under contract, rather than for the customer to prove that he isn't... I'd have thought it would be inflammatory going back to him and saying it's down to him to prove he isn't in contract" <sup>2</sup>

Despite my attempt to discuss the legal requirement for consent, the Subject Matter Expert (SME) insisted that the mere act of sending correspondence, if not challenged by the customer, constituted a binding agreement.

**SME 2 (22/08 14:30):** "yes if we contact a cx with contract info and they dont call in to object it is a binding agreement!" <sup>3</sup>

When I questioned this logic regarding evidence of consent, the SME dismissed my concerns entirely, claiming that regulators would automatically side with the company and that the customer is solely responsible for reading correspondence.

**SME 2 (22/08 14:34):** "where did you get that from? thats known as a burden of proof but we have proof... OfCom wont agree with the cx and an Ombudsman would explain the cx is responsible to read and agree/object to all correspondence from service providers" <sup>4</sup>

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### **Analysis of Potential Concerns**

- Potential Compliance Issue – Ofcom General Condition C1.5 (Contract Summary and Consent):  
The SME's assertion that a contract is binding simply because "we contact a cx with contract info and they dont call in to object" <sup>5</sup> presents a significant compliance risk. General Condition C1.5 requires providers to provide a Contract Summary and obtain express consent from the customer. Relying on a customer's silence or failure to object as proof of a contract ("negative option billing" or "inertia selling") is generally contrary to these requirements.
- Potential Compliance Issue – Evidence and Burden of Proof:  
The SME explicitly states that "OfCom wont agree with the cx" <sup>6</sup> and that the

customer is responsible for reading and objecting to correspondence. This ignores the provider's obligation to keep records of the customer's affirmative consent.

Advising an agent to tell a customer that the burden of proof is on them to disprove a contract 7 could mislead the consumer about their rights and escalate a complaint unnecessarily.

- Dignity and Working Conditions – Dismissive Support Culture:  
When the agent attempted to discuss valid regulatory concepts ("evidence of consent"), the SME's response was dismissive ("where did you get that from?" 8). Instead of explaining the company's specific compliance mechanism (e.g., how the "glitch" mentioned 9 might have affected the record), the SME shut down the inquiry with incorrect or legally dubious assertions. This discourages agents from raising legitimate compliance concerns, effectively penalizing diligence.

## P1-2 – Repeated failed credits and premature complaint closure (22/08)

### Narrative Report

I raised a case regarding a customer who was being pursued for a £317.86 debt that had been promised to be removed multiple times, asking for a way to expedite the resolution given the significant delay.

> Daniel Mark Jackson (22/08 14:56): "[redacted] has 317.86 outstanding on account, and has been promised multiple times this would be removed. I should resubmit to credit chat? anything we can do to speed things up, considering the delay?"

>

Sarah advised that a manager review was mandatory because the amount exceeded £200. I explained that my Team Leader, Noel, was absent and, crucially, that the standard process had already failed twice, with complaints being closed without the action actually being completed.

> Daniel Mark Jackson (22/08 15:07): "Noel isn't in today unfortunately, there have been two complaints opened and closed about this already, one closed two months ago, the other closed three months ago, both complaints stated that the credit had been approved and submitted to TL. He's very unhappy"

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Despite my flagging that previous "approvals" had resulted in closed complaints but no actual credit, Sarah did not offer to intervene or escalate the issue immediately. Instead, she instructed me to simply use the same team chat channel that had failed previously and to delay the customer further with a callback.

> Sarah Jane Fleming (22/08 15:15): "can you follow up with thoases agents , you can still pop it in your teams credit chat even if your TL isnt there... aploigise to the cx set a call beak to update him"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

#### \* Potential Compliance Issue – Ofcom General Condition C4 (Complaint Handling):

The agent explicitly identified that two formal complaints had been closed despite the underlying issue (the credit) remaining unresolved. Under Ofcom General Condition C4, providers must have and comply with a procedure that ensures complaints are resolved effectively. Closing a complaint on the assumption that a credit will be applied, without verifying it has been applied, represents a failure in the complaint handling process and risks consumer harm through continued collection activity on incorrect debt.

#### \* Working Conditions – Lack of Proactive Support and Ownership:

When the agent presented a clear case of systemic failure (two wrongly closed complaints and an angry customer) to a Team Leader, the support provided was passive. Rather than recognizing the risk and escalating the issue immediately to ensure the credit was finally applied, Sarah directed the agent back to the standard process ("pop it in your teams credit chat"). This leaves the agent to manage the customer's justified anger without the necessary authority or meaningful support to fix the problem.

### P1-3 – Prolonged wait times and selective support responses (23/08)

I raised a request for support regarding a billing refund, but despite SMEs being active in the chat, I received no acknowledgement for nearly an hour before a TL arrived and also initially ignored the request.

- \* 0 minutes: I posted my initial request for assistance.

- \* +12 minutes: I followed up asking if anyone was available to confirm, but received no response despite SMEs being active in the chat.

- \* +55 minutes: TL Jessica O'Driscoll posted a message responding to a different agent's query, ignoring my outstanding request.

- \* +1 hour 04 minutes: I posted again stating I was still looking for assistance.

- \* +1 hour 06 minutes: TL Jessica O'Driscoll finally responded to me.

#### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Working Conditions – Excessive Wait Times:

The agent was left waiting for over an hour for a simple confirmation. During the first 55 minutes, SMEs were active in the chat but did not acknowledge the query. This forces the agent to keep a customer on hold for an unacceptable duration or promise a callback without guaranteed support, directly contributing to work-related stress.

- \* Support Culture – Selective Engagement:

The evidence shows that when a TL finally entered the chat after a nearly hour-long delay, they prioritized a different, later query while ignoring the agent's long-standing request. This demonstrates a lack of a fair queuing system or supportive oversight, creating an environment where agents feel invisible and unsupported despite following protocol.

## P2-2 – Disputed call divert charges and support abandonment

### Narrative Report

I requested guidance regarding a customer who entered a contract specifically based on a "call divert" feature, but was not informed by the sales agent that these diverted calls would be chargeable. After a 12-minute wait, the SME responded by asking if the customer was explicitly told calls would be free. When I clarified that the cost was simply not mentioned, the SME argued that the customer was liable because the contract did not state charges wouldn't apply.

I felt this guidance was inadequate given that the customer's decision to buy relied on this specific feature, but I agreed to relay the decision and asked if the SME could handle a potential escalation that evening. The SME asked when I was calling back; I replied immediately, "I can do it now," but received no further response. As is common, the SME did not reply for the rest of the shift, requiring me to raise the issue afresh with another staff member and duplicate the work.

> SME (05/09 18:49): "im done at 7pm, when you calling them back?"

> Daniel Mark Jackson (05/09 18:49): "I can do it now"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

#### \* Potential Compliance Issue – Material Omission:

The SME's stance—that a customer is liable for charges simply because they were not explicitly told a service was free—risks violating regulations regarding misleading omissions (Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008). If a specific feature (call divert) is the primary motivation for the sale, failing to disclose significant associated costs could be considered a lack of transparency under Ofcom General Condition C1.

#### \* Working Conditions – Support Abandonment:

The SME engaged to the point of asking when the callback would happen, but when the agent confirmed immediate readiness, the SME ceased communication. This "ghosting" forces the agent to restart the support process with a new colleague, duplicating effort and increasing handling time while the customer waits.

## P2-7 – Escalation rejection and "Final Bill" delays (07/09)

### Narrative Report

I queried termination charges appearing on a customer's account, suspected to be an error caused by a new contract order. TL Jason Campbell advised that we could not confirm the error immediately.

> Jason Campbell (07/09 17:19): "in that case we would have to wait for the bill to be produced to see for certain"

>

This advice reflects a common internal process where we are guided to instruct customers to contact us again once a final bill is produced, rather than resolving the dispute at the point of contact. When I explained that the customer found it unacceptable to face a potential £395 charge and wait a month for clarity, and was requesting to escalate, TL Keelyn Ryan intervened after a seven-minute delay to reject the request.

> Keelyn Ryan (07/09 17:36): "is the cease charges an error ? we cant do anything until that bill is out"

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I informed her that although the customer had ended the call, I had promised a manager would contact him, and I explicitly offered to reconnect them immediately if she agreed to take the escalation.

> Daniel Mark Jackson (07/09 17:37): "he has actually gone, I said someone would contact him tomorrow. but I'm sure he'll take a call now if you'd like to take it on"

>

I received no reply to this offer. The escalation request was effectively ignored, leaving me unsupported and forcing me to explain the entire situation to a different Team Leader the following day.

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

#### \* Potential Compliance Issue – Ofcom General Condition C4 (Complaint Resolution):

The internal guidance to close a query by instructing the customer to wait for a future bill and contact the provider again likely fails the regulatory requirement to facilitate dispute resolution. Treating a complaint as resolved simply because the agent has advised the customer of a waiting period shifts the administrative burden onto the consumer and delays the rectification of evident billing errors.

#### \* Working Conditions – Escalation Avoidance and Support Abandonment:

The Team Leader explicitly rejected a clear request for escalation regarding a high-value dispute, citing process limitations rather than addressing the customer's dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the failure to respond to the agent's specific offer to arrange an immediate callback left the agent unsupported and necessitated the duplication of work with a new manager.

## P2-8 – Escalation delay and vulnerable customer (08/09)

### Narrative Report

I requested a leader for an escalation regarding a customer listed as vulnerable who felt misled about a deposit refund. Eamonn O'Shea (TL) initially responded but, six minutes later, announced he was taking a different escalation call, leaving me without support.

> Eamonn O'Shea (08/09 14:39): "Going on an Escalation Call"

>

SME 1 continued the conversation but did not engage with my specific request for escalation, instead reiterating policy. After they stopped responding, I waited eight minutes until SME 2 joined, who also only discussed policy. Frustrated by the lack of support and the delay, I sought advice from Copilot AI, which confirmed that my instinct to escalate was correct given the customer's frustration and the complexity of the issue. I posted this AI analysis in the chat to validate my request.

> Copilot AI (posted by agent 08/09 14:55): "Escalation Request: If the customer explicitly asks to speak to a manager or TL... Unresolved Frustration: The customer is clearly unhappy... if they're losing trust or becoming irate, a TL might help de-escalate."

>

After a 17-minute wait, Eamonn returned and offered a Webex chat. Following our discussion, I posted a message at 16:09 expressing concern that, despite his advice, I still lacked sufficient information to offer the customer a meaningful resolution or progress the case.

> Daniel Mark Jackson (08/09 16:09): "I'm going to feel a little silly calling back regarding the request to speak to a manager, if I am then unable to progress the case forward... What do you think?"

>

What followed was a significant delay. I sent updates at 16:40, 16:49, and a detailed summary of my callback to the customer at 17:22, all without response. At 17:27, Eamonn finally replied asking for the account number—details which were already in the chat. I replied immediately. I did not receive another response until 2 hours and 12 minutes later.

> Eamonn O'Shea (08/09 18:40): "I'll follow up"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

#### \* Potential Compliance Issue – Vulnerable Customers:

The customer in this case was identified as vulnerable. Ofcom General Condition C5 requires providers to give special consideration to the needs of vulnerable consumers. The disjointed support process—involving multiple SMEs, a TL who disappeared for hours, and a lack of clear escalation ownership—delayed resolution for a vulnerable customer over a financial matter (deposit refund), potentially failing the fairness and accessibility standards required by the regulator.

#### \* Working Conditions – Support Abandonment:

The agent was left in limbo for significant periods (e.g., the 2-hour gap between providing the account number and receiving a commitment to follow up). The TL's request for an account number that was already visible in the chat history suggests a lack of attention. Furthermore, the final response ("I'll follow up") came so late in the shift that it provided the agent with little confidence that the action would actually be taken, increasing anxiety about the unresolved customer promise.

### P3-1 – Vulnerable customer and support insensitivity (12/09)

#### Narrative Report

I requested a Team Leader (TL) to discuss a highly sensitive case involving an elderly, bedbound customer who likely had dementia and was facing a landline disconnection. I explicitly raised "duty of care" concerns regarding the risk of the customer losing their essential communication service.

After an 11-minute wait for a response, TL Eamonn O'Shea replied with functional guidance on cancelling the order but did not engage with the specific vulnerabilities I had highlighted. In the same public message, he criticised me for not raising a complaint, using capitalised text and multiple exclamation marks.

> Eamonn O'Shea (12/09 20:05): "Also, you did NOT raise a complaint on behalf of the customer!!!"

>

Concerned about the aggressive tone and the lack of support regarding the customer's welfare, I requested a Webex chat. However, the subsequent guidance remained procedural, focusing on call-back limits rather than safeguarding, leaving me feeling unsupported in managing a high-risk situation.

#### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Dignity at Work – Unprofessional Communication: The Team Leader's use of capitalisation and multiple exclamation marks in a public group setting constitutes aggressive communication that can be perceived as shouting. This public admonishment focused entirely on a procedural point while ignoring the distressing welfare context the agent was managing, demonstrating a lack of professional empathy.

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Ofcom General Condition C5 (Vulnerable Customers): The support provided for a high-risk case (bedbound, dementia) was largely procedural, focusing on system processes rather than the specific needs of the vulnerable consumer. This raises concerns under Ofcom General Condition C5, which requires providers to give special consideration to the needs of vulnerable consumers to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

- \* Working Conditions – Inadequate Support and Stress: The agent was left to manage a high-stakes safeguarding issue with only rigid procedural guidance and a public reprimand. This discourages agents from escalating legitimate safety concerns and contributes to cumulative work-related stress by prioritising process compliance over ethical duty of care.



#### P4-1 – Excessive wait for escalation and support abandonment (20/09)

##### Narrative Report

I requested a Team Leader (TL) for an immediate escalation regarding a customer with a "unified" package dispute involving both broadband and mobile billing. The customer specifically requested a manager and refused to be passed between departments. I posted my request in the Billing Support Group Chat at 12:03. I waited 27 minutes before receiving any response. TL Keelyn Ryan messaged me via a private Direct Message (DM) rather than the group chat.

Keelyn Ryan (20/09 12:30):  
"what's up"

I replied to her DM less than two minutes later,

Daniel Mark Jackson (20/09 12:32):  
"ah! hi, thank you, one moment please."

Despite responding immediately to a TL who had already left me waiting nearly half an hour, I never heard another word from Keelyn. She abandoned the interaction entirely. At 12:39 - 36 minutes after my initial request—a different TL, Kassie Caulfield, responded in the main Billing Support Group Chat. However, rather than facilitating the escalation, Kassie immediately attempted to push the issue away to the mobile department, questioning my judgment.

Kassie Caulfield (20/09 12:39):  
"Yes he will need to go to mobile"  
>

I explained again that the customer had already refused this and that there were unresolved broadband issues. Kassie continued to resist taking the call. It was a 50-minute struggle to get support. Kassie repeatedly challenged my assessment rather than trusting my request.

##### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Working Conditions – Support Abandonment: The agent waited 27 minutes for an initial response. When a Team Leader (Keelyn) finally made contact via DM, she disengaged immediately after the agent replied, leaving the agent waiting again without explanation. This lack of reliability forces the agent to restart the support process repeatedly while managing a live customer.

- \* Working Conditions – Excessive Wait Times: A 50-minute struggle to secure an escalation places the agent in an untenable position. Holding a dissatisfied customer for this duration escalates the conflict and significantly increases the agent's stress load.

- \* Dignity at Work – Lack of Trust and Respect: The second Team Leader's response involved questioning the agent's competence and understanding of the case rather than trusting their judgment that an escalation was necessary. This resistance implies a lack of respect for the agent's role and decision-making.

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Complaint Handling (Ofcom GC C4): Attempting to force a customer with a "unified" complaint into a specific department silo (mobile), especially after they have refused, acts as a barrier to effective dispute resolution. The delay and reluctance

### P4-3 – Vulnerable customer and rigid bill shock application (28/09)

#### Narrative Report

I sought authorization for a refund for a 96-year-old customer who had received a bill for £258.15. The customer, who had been with BT for over 50 years, had incurred the charges after her family removed their landline and incorrectly advised her that calling their mobiles would not cost extra. Given her age and distress, I requested a "bill shock" refund.

I waited 8 minutes for a response in the group chat. During this wait, I managed to secure a full refund agreement from a different Team Leader via a private Direct Message (DM), ensuring the customer was protected.

However, the eventual response from the SME in the group chat was to reject the request based on rigid internal criteria, ignoring the customer's vulnerability.

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#### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Vulnerable Customers (Ofcom GC C5): The SME's guidance focused strictly on internal credit thresholds ("Higher Credits bracket") and technical definitions of bill shock, explicitly disregarding the customer's extreme vulnerability (96 years old) and the lack of intent to incur costs. This approach risks failing the regulatory requirement to treat vulnerable consumers with fairness and empathy.

- \* Support Quality – Inconsistency: The contrast between the SME's rejection in the public chat and the Team Leader's agreement to refund in private highlights significant inconsistency in support. This leaves agents to navigate conflicting advice to achieve fair outcomes for customers.

- \* Dignity and Culture – Rigid Policy Application: The comment "her family told her it would be ok but we didnt" demonstrates a lack of empathy for a confused, elderly customer, prioritising policy adherence over the moral duty to resolve a clear misunderstanding for a vulnerable individual.

## P5-1 – Store mis-selling and refusal of manager support (02/10)

### Narrative Report

I sought assistance regarding a customer who had taken out a contract in-store and was disputing a discount. The customer claimed he was promised a £15 discount for the full 24 months, but it had ended after 3 months. Due to childcare responsibilities for three children under 10, the customer explained it was "impossible" for him to return to the store to dispute it in person.

I waited 15 minutes for a response. When the SME replied, they stated there was "nothing we can do" and insisted the customer must return to the store. When I explained the customer was unhappy and specifically requested a manager, the SME refused the escalation.

SME (02/10 18:15):

> "there is nothing a manager can do in this case you need to advise if escalated that they will tell him the same"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Complaint Handling (Ofcom GC C4): The refusal to allow a customer to speak to a manager or escalate a complaint regarding mis-selling acts as a barrier to dispute resolution. Denying an escalation request based on the predicted outcome ("they will tell him the same") prevents the customer from exercising their right to have their grievance heard by a senior staff member.

- \* Vulnerable Consumers (Ofcom GC C5): The customer identified a specific barrier to accessing the standard complaints process (returning to store) due to caring responsibilities. By rigidly insisting on a physical store visit and refusing telephone escalation, the provider failed to make reasonable adjustments to ensure the complaints process was accessible.

- \* Support Quality – Disempowerment: The advice provided ("nothing we can do") leaves the agent in a conflict situation with no tools to resolve it. Forcing the agent to refuse a manager request contrary to standard escalation procedures places them in a high-stress position of accountability without authority.

### P5-3 – Store mis-selling and escalation refusal (04/10)

#### Narrative Report

I requested guidance regarding a customer disputing a contract taken out in-store. He claimed he was promised a discount for 24 months which ended after three, and specifically requested a manager.

It is business-as-usual to tell customers they must return to the store in these situations, a practice so engrained that escalations are routinely refused. The justification is always that there is no call recording to verify the transaction, though this seems a weak argument as a physical store visit offers no recording either.

SME (04/10 12:39):

> "No TL will take that at all, CX has to go back to the store, end of."

>

I challenged this refusal by posting a screenshot from "Albert"—our mandatory service guide and "bible" for procedures—which states that a complaint should be escalated if the customer "specifically asked to speak to a manager". We are trained that sticking to Albert protects us from liability.

Daniel Mark Jackson (04/10 12:48):

> "I'm just following albert"

>

Despite citing the official company policy that justifies the escalation, Team Leader (TL) Jason Campbell upheld the refusal, insisting that a manager "wont be able to do anything" because they cannot listen to a call. Showing the official guidance did not change the outcome, leaving me to pass a refusal on to the customer.

#### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Complaint Handling (Ofcom GC C4): Explicitly refusing a customer's request to speak to a manager ("No TL will take that") creates a barrier to the complaints process. The inability to access store recordings does not negate the provider's obligation to hear the customer's grievance and provide a final position. Denying escalation based on the channel of sale (store vs. phone) may fail regulatory requirements for accessible dispute resolution.

- \* Working Conditions – Conflicting Guidance: The agent attempted to follow the official knowledge base ("Albert"), which instructs staff to escalate upon request. However, local management overruled this official policy with an unwritten custom ("store, end of"). This discrepancy creates significant role ambiguity and stress, as agents are punished for following the very rules designed to protect them.

- \* Dignity and Culture – Dismissive Tone: The SME's use of the phrase "end of" to terminate a valid query regarding an escalation is unprofessional and dismissive. It shuts down professional dialogue and discourages agents from advocating for the customer's right to be heard.

## P6-10 – Vulnerable customer and "wait to dispute" guidance (18/10)

### Narrative Report

I sought assistance regarding a customer with cognitive difficulties who was panicking about a bill for £32.99. The account had only been active since Tuesday, and although I had cancelled it that day, the customer was distressed about the bill currently showing. I requested to cancel the bill immediately to alleviate his panic, noting that he would have stopped the service earlier if he could have.

Team Leader Jason Campbell refused the immediate adjustment to avoid the potential administrative inconvenience of "double crediting" once the final bill was produced.

I asked if it was fair to advise the customer that he could dispute the charge later, effectively telling him he must contact us again to resolve a known issue. Jason confirmed this was the process but explicitly warned me against reassuring the customer that the dispute would be successful.

Jason Campbell (18/10 15:38):

> "yea - He can dispute the bill is he so wishes, but dont make any promises with it"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Vulnerable Customers (Ofcom GC C5): The agent explicitly identified the customer as having "cognitive difficulties" and being in a state of "panic" regarding the bill. The Team Leader's instruction to delay resolution until a future bill is produced places a significant administrative burden on a vulnerable consumer, requiring them to understand the billing cycle and initiate a future dispute. This failure to adapt the process to the customer's needs likely breaches General Condition C5.

- \* Complaint Handling (Ofcom GC C4): The guidance provided ("He can dispute the bill is he so wishes") is reactive rather than proactive. By refusing to resolve the known issue immediately (charges for a cancelled service), the provider is knowingly generating a future dispute, forcing the customer to make repeated contact to resolve a single issue.

- \* Support Quality – Lack of Empathy: Prioritising internal system convenience (avoiding "double credit") over the immediate welfare of a distressed, vulnerable customer demonstrates a lack of empathy and a rigid adherence to process that damages the customer experience.

## P6-11 – "Goodwill" credit and system failures (18/10)

### Narrative Report

I requested a Team Leader (TL) to authorize a credit for a customer who had been billed for TV services despite the service ceasing on 17 October. The customer refused my standard options (paying the full Direct Debit and waiting for a refund, or cancelling the Direct Debit to pay by card) and insisted the Direct Debit amount be corrected immediately.

I waited 12 minutes for an initial response.

Keelyn Ryan (18/10 14:17):

> "how much his the credit ?"

>

Keelyn Ryan (18/10 14:18):

> "apply that as GW"

>

Although the TL quickly agreed to apply the amount as "Good Will" (GW) rather than a billing correction, I was unable to process it myself because my credit tool was not working. I requested for her to apply it, but received no further reply from Keelyn.

Daniel Mark Jackson (18/10 14:19):

> "could you applu this as my credits aren't working, please"

>

I waited another 7 minutes for assistance. Eventually, a different TL, Jason Campbell, intervened to help.

Jason Campbell (18/10 14:26):

> "I will PM me the details"

>

It took 21 minutes from my initial request to finally secure the action needed to resolve the customer's query.

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Working Conditions – System Failures: The agent was unable to perform a basic function (applying a credit) due to system failure ("credits aren't working"). This necessitates unnecessary escalation to a Team Leader for routine tasks, increasing the agent's dependency on support and causing delays.

- \* Working Conditions – Excessive Wait Times: A 21-minute delay to resolve a simple billing error for a customer who is refusing to pay constitutes an excessive wait. This keeps the agent and customer in limbo, damaging the customer experience and increasing the agent's handle time metrics.

- \* Potential Compliance Issue – Billing Accuracy (Ofcom GC C1/C5): The Team Leader instructed the agent to apply the refund as "Good Will" (GW). Since the customer had been billed for a service that had already ceased, this was a billing error, not a goodwill gesture. Misclassifying billing corrections as goodwill can distort complaint data and fail to acknowledge the provider's error.

## P6-8 – Escalation refusal and conflicting leadership (19/10)

### Narrative Report

I contacted Team Leader (TL) Jessica O'Driscoll via private message regarding a complex dispute with a customer—a former lawyer and MP—who claimed a "long standing understanding" allowed him to leave without Early Termination Charges (HTTC). Jessica reviewed the case, including checking for call evidence, and explicitly confirmed that if I put it in the support chat, "a TL will take the escalation".

Relying on this confirmation, I called the customer, who requested the escalation. However, when I raised it in the group chat, a different TL, Keelyn Ryan, refused to take the call. Her justification was that because the final bill had not yet been produced, the termination fees were not technically on the account.

When I challenged this refusal, pointing out that I was acting on a "decision from Jess" who had already reviewed the case, Keelyn dismissed her colleague's judgment entirely.

Keelyn Ryan (19/10 17:12):

> "obviously jess didnt know the HTTC weren't on a bill yet... I cant even take the call to discuss them"

>

This undermined the previous TL's instruction and left me stranded. I expressed my considerable distress at being forced to break my promise to the customer after following leadership advice, describing the job as "a battle" where I had "gone out of my way" only to be blocked.

Keelyn offered no textual reply to this expression of distress, simply acknowledging the message with a "thumbs up" emoji reaction.

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

\* Working Conditions – Conflicting Leadership: The agent followed explicit guidance from one Team Leader (Jessica) only to have it overruled and undermined by another (Keelyn) during a live call. Keelyn's comment ("obviously jess didnt know") exposes a lack of cohesion in management, leaving the agent caught between conflicting instructions and forced to break a promise made to the customer.

\* Potential Compliance Issue – Complaint Handling (Ofcom GC C4): Refusing to take an escalation regarding Early Termination Charges solely because they have not yet appeared on a final bill acts as a barrier to dispute resolution. The customer is disputing their liability for the inevitable charges; forcing them to wait for the bill and call back creates unnecessary friction.

\* Dignity at Work – Sarcastic and Dismissive Behaviour: Responding to an agent's genuine expression of stress and distress ("this job can feel like a battle") with a single "thumbs up" emoji is unprofessional. It appears sarcastic and trivialises the agent's struggle to provide good service.

## P6-7 – Excessive wait and systemic billing inability (24/10)

### Narrative Report

I requested a Team Leader (TL) for a customer who had been mis-sold a package at £39.99 but was billed £46.99. I had already listened to the sales call myself and confirmed the error. The customer specifically refused a lump sum credit—a standard workaround we are forced to offer because the billing department treats correcting a monthly recurring charge as "impossible" due to a logistical blockage in the system. Consequently, agents are routinely left to force customers to accept a bulk refund (e.g., 24 months of the price difference) while the incorrect higher direct debit continues every month. When this customer insisted on the correct monthly billing amount she was promised, I had no tool to provide it and needed escalation.

I waited 9 minutes for initial help. TL Jason Campbell suggested I try the "Value" team, but I explained they could not amend the price either. Jason then delayed taking the call further because he had "no access to the system" and wanted to double-check with another manager.

Jason Campbell (24/10 18:33):

> "I know the customer is waiting - However, give me 2 mins - I just want to confirm with another TL as I have no access to the system atm"

>

The customer waited over 30 minutes in total before the escalation was finally accepted.

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

- \* Working Conditions – Systemic Inflexibility: The department's inability to correct a basic recurring billing error forces agents into conflict with customers. Agents are compelled to negotiate awkward lump-sum "fixes" rather than simply honoring the agreed contract price, leaving them powerless to resolve legitimate grievances without escalation.

- \* Working Conditions – Excessive Wait Times: Keeping a customer on hold for over 30 minutes simply to secure an escalation acceptance places immense pressure on the agent and degrades the customer experience.

- \* Support Quality – Lack of Resources: The Team Leader explicitly stated he had "no access to the system", revealing a failure in the support infrastructure where leaders cannot perform basic verification tasks, creating bottlenecks.

- \* Dignity at Work – Lack of Trust: The agent had already listened to the call and confirmed the mis-selling. The TL's insistence on verifying this with another TL before taking the call implies a lack of trust in the agent's investigation, causing unnecessary delay.



## P6-14 – Delayed engineer visit credit (31/10)

### Narrative Report

I requested assistance to apply a £40 credit for a customer regarding an engineer visit. I explained that I had submitted the request to my Team Leader (Noel) on Monday, but he had not "got round to it yet" and was now absent until the following Monday. I needed the credit applied immediately to call the customer back.

I waited 10 minutes for a response.

Daniel Mark Jackson (10:33):

> "[redacted] should have had £40 credited to his account for an engineer visit, but my TL hasn't got round to it yet. I submitted it on monday... any chance it could be credited now?"

>

Sarah Jane Fleming (10:43):

> "whats the acc number... sorry just seen it - will apply now for you"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

\* Working Conditions – Administrative Bottlenecks: The reliance on a specific Team Leader to manually process a credit resulted in a five-day delay (Monday to Friday) because the manager "hasn't got round to it". This forces the agent to chase up routine administrative tasks and seek alternative support, adding to their workload.

\* Customer Experience – Unnecessary Delays: The customer was left waiting nearly a week for a promised credit due to internal processing delays. This lack of automated or timely processing damages trust and requires the agent to manage the customer's potential frustration regarding the delay.

## P2-1 – Public performance management and team culture

### Narrative Report

Shortly after joining the team, I witnessed the Team Leader posting messages in the public group chat regarding overdue tasks. While I was not personally named, the public listing of colleagues' outstanding actions established the tone of the working environment.

> Noel Curran (13:24): "All these Actions are Overdue, HOW can we have so many... these must be closed today or else will be documenting, this level for 3 agents is crazy"

>

### Analysis of Potential Concerns

\* Dignity and Working Conditions – Public Reprimand: The Team Leader's use of a public forum to criticise performance—employing capitalised text ("HOW"), derogatory descriptors ("crazy"), and threats of formal action ("documenting")—constitutes public shaming. This approach fosters a culture of pressure and fear, humiliating staff before peers instead of addressing workload issues through private, supportive coaching.

### Assessment of Analysis:

The analysis is objective based on the text provided. The use of specific formatting (caps) and threats ("documenting") in a group setting is factually verifiable in the source text and aligns with the definition of public shaming. There is no ambiguity here that would cast doubt on your interpretation.