

complaint

Mr R complains about an overseas money transfer he made through his bank, HSBC Bank Plc. He says HSBC gave him incorrect information about the transfer.

our initial conclusions

The adjudicator concluded HSBC had been entitled to make the original payment. At Mr R's request it had later traced the payment. HSBC then correctly told him the response it had received - that the money had been received by the beneficiary's bank. HSBC had quoted an incorrect reference in its response to Mr R. But this hadn't changed the outcome, and its refund of the £25 trace fee was reasonable. Mr R didn't agree. In brief summary, he said HSBC should have flagged (at online payment stage) the details he'd input were incorrect. HSBC took too long to deal with the trace.

my final decision

To decide what is fair and reasonable in this complaint, I have considered everything that Mr R and HSBC have provided. I have focused on the issues I consider to be central to this dispute.

Mr R made an error with the original overseas money transfer, by quoting the beneficiary bank's SWIFT code instead of the account number. The beneficiary told him it hadn't received the money. So he paid the same amount by debit card, which the beneficiary received immediately. But I find this wasn't HSBC's fault. I don't agree that HSBC should have flagged with Mr R that he'd input incorrect details for the beneficiary when he made his online payment.

When Mr R contacted HSBC, I find it properly offered to trace the original transfer, and he agreed to its £25 fee for this. HSBC correctly told Mr R the SWIFT message it had received from the beneficiary's bank: namely, that the beneficiary bank had received the money, and had been able to credit it to the beneficiary's account. In its response HSBC quoted a different reference from the code Mr R actually used. I can see that this, and the minor delay, was frustrating for Mr R. But I don't consider it made a material difference to the outcome – he *had* quoted an incorrect code, if not the one in the bank's message. He had already duplicated the payment, because the beneficiary told him it hadn't received the original payment. And I consider the bank's refund of its £25 fee was a reasonable response. **My decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.**

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mr R either to accept or reject my decision before 21 October 2014.

Amanda Maycock

ombudsman at the Financial Ombudsman Service

The ombudsman may complete this section where appropriate – adding comments or further explanations of particular relevance to the case.

ombudsman notes

what is a final decision?

- A final decision by an ombudsman is our last word on a complaint. We send the final decision at the same time to both sides – the consumer and the financial business.
- Our complaints process involves various stages. It gives both parties to the complaint the opportunity to tell us their side of the story, provide further information, and disagree with our earlier findings – before the ombudsman reviews the case and makes a final decision.
- A final decision is the end of our complaints process. This means the ombudsman will not be able to deal with any further correspondence about the merits of the complaint.

what happens next?

- A final decision only becomes legally binding on the financial business if the consumer accepts it. To do this, the consumer should sign and date the acceptance card we send with the final decision – and return it to us before the date set out in the decision.
- If the consumer accepts a final decision before the date set out in the decision we will tell the financial business – it will then have to comply promptly with any instructions set out by the ombudsman in the decision.
- If the consumer does not accept a final decision before the date set out in the decision, neither side will be legally bound by it.