

complaint

Mr M complains about the exchange rate HSBC Bank Plc applied when he received money from abroad and its failure to explain how it was calculated.

our initial conclusions

Our adjudicator did not recommend that this complaint be upheld as he considered HSBC had acted in line with the terms and conditions of Mr M's accounts and explained sufficiently the rate applied. Mr M disagreed saying that HSBC had not disclosed in a transparent way how it had calculated the exchange rate it had used.

my final decision

To decide what is fair and reasonable in this complaint, I have considered everything that Mr M and HSBC have provided.

I am satisfied that HSBC is entitled to apply its exchange rate to incoming funds from abroad where these funds are paid into an account in a different currency to the currency in which the funds are received. This appears to no longer be disputed.

Mr M has asked HSBC to explain in detail how it calculated the rate it used in his case giving actual numbers. I can understand why Mr M wants this information – he believes HSBC is, in effect, applying a hidden charge. However, I agree with our adjudicator that HSBC processed Mr M's transaction in line with its terms and conditions. I also consider the explanation HSBC has given to date to be sufficient. In the circumstances, I agree that this complaint should not be upheld.

My final decision is that I am not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mr M either to accept or reject my decision before 15 October 2014.

Nicolas Atkinson

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.