

The Banking Code and You

Setting standards for banks, building societies
and other banking service providers

We subscribe to the Banking Code.

Not all financial institutions do. Doing your banking with someone who subscribes to the Banking Code gives you extra confidence. You should check that any other financial institution you deal with for banking services (such as savings accounts, current accounts, loans and credit cards) also subscribes.

The Banking Code sets minimum standards of good service that you can expect from banks, building societies and other providers of banking services. This leaflet tells you about our key commitments and responsibilities to you under the Banking Code.

Fairness commitment

We promise we will treat you fairly and reasonably when providing you with products and services covered in this Code. We will keep this promise by meeting all of the key commitments shown below.

- We will make sure that our advertising and promotional literature is clear and not misleading and that you are given clear information about our products and services.
- We will give you clear information about accounts and services, how they work, their terms and conditions and the interest rates which may apply.
- We will help you use your account or service by sending you regular statements (where appropriate) and we will keep you informed about changes to the interest rates, charges or terms and conditions.
- We will help you to switch your current account between financial institutions that subscribe to this Code.
- We will lend responsibly.
- We will deal quickly and sympathetically with things that go wrong and consider all cases of financial difficulty sympathetically and positively.
- We will treat all your personal information as private and confidential, and provide secure and reliable banking and payment systems.
- We will publicise this Code, have copies available and make sure that our staff are trained to put it into practice.

To meet these promises, we will, as a minimum, take the steps and meet the standards set out in the rest of this Code.

How you can find out more

The Banking Code is updated regularly. The most recent edition came into force on 31st March 2008. It contains standards that cover:

- choosing products and services which meet your needs;
- running your account;
- borrowing money;
- interest rates, charges and terms and conditions, and how you will be told about any changes to these;
- cards and PINs;
- protecting your account and your personal information;
- moving or closing your account;
- dealing with financial difficulties;
- complaints; and
- dormant accounts and unclaimed assets.

Dormant accounts and unclaimed assets

If you have money in a dormant or lost account it will always be your property or that of your legal heirs. In addition to proactive searching that we may undertake, if you ask us, we will tell you how to access these accounts. This also applies if we subscribe to the unclaimed asset scheme (due to be introduced in 2009) intended to make genuinely lost monies available for community causes. Further information can be found on our website, by phoning our helpline, by asking our staff or by visiting www.mylostaccount.org.uk

How to make a complaint

If you ask us, we will tell you how to make a complaint and how quickly we will deal with it. If we cannot settle the complaint to your satisfaction, you may ask the **Financial Ombudsman Service** to look into it. You can contact them at: South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR.
www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk

Copies of the Banking Code

If you would like a free copy of the Banking Code, you can get one from us. Or you can view and download a copy from the British Bankers' Association's website at www.bba.org.uk.

Banking Code Standards Board

The Banking Code is monitored by an independent organisation – the **Banking Code Standards Board**. It makes sure that any institutions which subscribe to the Code follow it and it can take action if any institution fails to do so. You can contact them at: Level 12, City Tower, 40 Basinghall Street, London EC2V 5DE or via their website at www.bankingcode.org.uk