

Central Credit Register Information

When you apply to Member First Credit Union for a loan, we assess your loan application based on your affordability to repay the loan, what this means is that before approving any loans, we ensure that at the end of the week or the month, or whatever the repay frequency you have chosen, that you will have enough money to both sustain your current lifestyle and still be in a position to repay the loan.

We assess the affordability of your loan based on the information you provide us (that's why we ask you for bank statements and proof of income etc) and by checking both the Irish Credit Bureau (ICB) and most importantly the Central Credit Register (CCR).

The CCR is a centralised method of collecting information on consumer loans, it was set up under the Credit Reporting Act 2013 and is under the control of the Central Bank of Ireland.

The CCR was primarily brought in as a result of our last financial crisis, primarily to ensure that Credit Institutions would not loan to those who cannot afford to borrow. We have all heard the stories about certain institutions encouraging borrowers to take out loans they couldn't afford, in order to buy such necessities as hot tubs for back gardens in Clondalkin and unbuilt apartments in eastern Europe.

The Credit Reporting Act requires those who provide loans that are greater than €500 to make a monthly report to the CCR. The report must be "complete and accurate", what this means is that we have a legal obligation to ensure that the report we send to the CCR doesn't leave any details out and what is contained within the report is correct.

The complete and accurate reports simply list each loan, the amount borrowed and whether or not it is being repaid to the agreed payment schedule, therefore if a borrower was to miss a loan repayment, then this will be noted on the CCR report for that period.

The CCR retain these reports for 5 years, if for example I went travelling around Australia for a year, and I didn't pay my loan for that year, then the fact I missed 12 monthly repayments may stay on my Credit Report for 5 years, and more importantly be available to lenders, who are going to be making decisions on loans such as my mortgage application. The lenders will simply see that I missed 12 repayments and not care how much fun I had in Australia.

That is why we always say come talk to us about your loan and that is why all our loan documentation contains the following Statutory warning;

WARNING IF YOU DO NOT MEET THE REPAYMENTS ON YOUR CREDIT AGREEMENT, YOUR ACCOUNT WILL GO INTO ARREARS. THIS MAY AFFECT YOUR CREDIT RATING, WHICH MAY LIMIT YOUR ABILITY TO ACCESS CREDIT IN THE FUTURE.

The CCR's website can be accessed at www.centralcreditregister.ie, it is a very informative website and is easily accessible, the web site sets out your rights in relation to your Credit Report, for example, you can:

1. Request your Credit Report (we highly recommend that this is something you do), this allows you to check your own report identify any inaccurate information contained within it.
2. Apply to have your report amended if you find inaccuracies.
3. Insert a 200 word explanatory statement on the report, this allows you to explain, give your version or simply make a statement about your Credit Report.

4. Report that you reasonably believe your financial identity is being impersonated by fraudsters.
5. Find out who accessed your Credit Report- if you applied to Bank A for a car loan and Bank B has accessed your Credit Report, then you have to right to find out why Bank B accessed your Credit Report.

Neither the CCR, nor the Central Bank grade or score your Credit Rating, nor do either of them say who can or who can't obtain a loan, that is the sole responsibility of the lender, who will assess both your affordability to repay based on the information you provide us and the information that your Credit Report provides us.

It is important that you contact us if you think you are going to have problems with your loan repayments, we don't judge you, deny you a decent lifestyle or tut tut behind your back, we simply want to make sure you are in a position to pay back your loan, and it is vitally important that you pay attention to the Statutory Loan Warning.

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