

# The Benefits of Real-Time Data Reporting for UK Consumers and Lenders

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## Background and Motivation

UK credit reporting has traditionally relied on monthly batch cycles, which often result in outdated information and timing mismatches in consumer credit files. In response to these limitations, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) highlighted the need for timelier credit reporting in its Credit Information Market Study Final Report – Remedy 4A (2023), emphasising the importance of improving fairness and accuracy.

This project investigates whether real-time data reporting (RTDR) can address these issues by enhancing credit scoring accuracy, improving consumer outcomes, and strengthening lenders' decision quality.

## Key Findings

- **Credit Score Uplift:** Real-time proxy increased average scores by +23 points.
- **Lower Indebtedness:** Reported utilisation and balances were significantly lower under the real-time proxy than monthly updates.
- **Better Lending Outcomes:** Approvals rose from 20.4% → 23.1%, with more high-limit approvals and fewer rejections (-2.7pp).
- **Risk Mitigation:** RTDR could help lenders avoid around 21% of potentially inappropriate approvals.

Cohort 1: Real-Time Proxy		Cohort 2: Monthly Update	
n = 70,535		n = 106,722	
Approval Rate: 23.1%		Approval Rate: 20.4%	
High Credit	14,149 (20.1%)	High Credit	19,419 (18.2%)
Low Credit	2,117 (3.0%)	Low Credit	2,358 (2.2%)
Rejected	54,069 (76.9%)	Rejected	84,945 (79.6%)

Figure 1: Credit Application Outcomes Distribution

## Data and Methods

This study draws on Experian's Delphi and CAIS datasets (June 2023 to May 2025). A timing-proxy method was created to mimic real-time reporting by aligning monthly snapshots with repayment events. Analysis focused on non-delinquent credit card and personal loan cohorts, using paired-sample t-tests and classification analysis to compare credit scores, utilisation, and lending outcomes under batch versus proxy reporting.

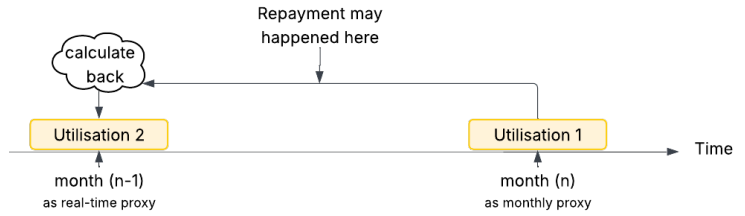


Figure 2: Core Concept of the real-time proxy method

## Value of the Research

This study provides empirical evidence that timely reporting reduces mismeasurement in credit assessments. By capturing repayment behaviour more accurately, RTDR offers lenders and consumers a fairer and more reliable picture of creditworthiness.

For lenders, the findings highlight practical benefits such as more accurate risk evaluation, fewer decision reversals, and stronger compliance with regulatory expectations, particularly those set out by the FCA.

For consumers, the shift to real-time reporting promises fairer outcomes, quicker improvements in credit scores following repayment, and a reduced likelihood of unfair declines caused by outdated data.

More broadly, this study supports the FCA's Consumer Duty by aligning credit assessments with customers' current financial circumstances, ensuring that lending decisions reflect reality rather than lagged information.

Finally, this study suggests that targeted adoption of RTDR for utilisation-critical products (credit cards and personal loans) can deliver near-term benefits.

## Practical Recommendations for Experian and Industry

- **Pilot real-time reporting** for credit cards and personal loans. (e.g. *AperiData provides real-time, Open-Banking-powered credit data*)
- **Add recency-aware utilisation fields** in bureau feeds. (e.g. *Credit Canary offers real-time decisioning with Open Banking and credit/tax data*)
- **Strengthen governance and transparency** to ensure compliance. (e.g. *ClearScore provides lenders with Open Banking affordability insights*)

Note: Industry examples are contextual; not part of the dissertation's empirical analysis