

The complaint

Mr R complains that Revolut Ltd (Revolut) refused to accept a payment into his account.

What happened

Mr R says following receiving winnings from a well-known online betting company, he arranged for the proceeds to be paid into his account with Revolut. Mr R says Revolut returned the payment without good reason. Mr R says before making the payment to his Revolut account he checked their website and while it showed payments to betting companies weren't allowed there was nothing to say payments into his account couldn't be accepted. Mr R wants Revolut to provide an apology and pay him compensation for the inconvenience caused to him for the error they made when returning the payment.

Revolut says they acted fairly in returning the payment but accept this has been inconvenient for Mr R and offered one month of their premium plan excluding travel insurance, free of charge, as way of an apology.

Mr R wasn't happy with Revolut's response and referred the matter to this service.

The investigator looked at all the information available but didn't uphold the complaint. The investigator says Revolut returned the payment in good time and their website mentions they don't accept payments from certain entities. The investigator felt while the compensation offered was modest it was sufficient, and an apology had been given.

Mr R wasn't happy with the investigator's view and asked for the matter to be referred to an ombudsman for a final decision.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so, I have come to the same outcome as the investigator and I will explain how I have come to my decision.

I can understand it would have been frustrating for Mr R to see his payment returned when he had checked with Revolut's website before arranging the payment to them. When looking at this complaint I have considered if Revolut acted fairly when they returned the payment credited to his account from the betting company and if the redress they have offered, for any inconvenience this may have caused, was sufficient.

What happened here was Mr R arranged to credit his account with Revolut following winning a modest sum from a major online betting company. Mr R maintains he checked Revolut's website before organising the payment and while it mentions payment to gambling companies weren't permitted there was nothing to say payments weren't allowed to be received from them. Mr R says this was a simple matter of a faster payment made from one UK business to his account and it shouldn't have been an issue and if it was, then Revolut should have made this clearer on their website.

I understand what Mr R is saying here and while there is no definitive list on Revolut's website of those business they may not accept payments from, they have made clear that payments to gambling sites are prohibited. So, with Mr R being aware of this, although he says there is no specific mention of this, I am satisfied he had considered the payment may have been an issue and that's why he checked the website for further information.

Not having specific mention of whom funds are acceptable from isn't the same as saying any payment into the account must be accepted by Revolut. Their website does say, "Due to compliance reasons, we're unable to accept deposits by transfer from certain sources. This includes some cryptocurrency exchanges, certain countries, banks, and entities." Revolut can reasonably decide whom they are prepared to do business with and with what "entities". If Mr R wasn't sure about the acceptance of the deposit, it was his responsibility to ensure this was permitted given he did have doubts about this before he made the arrangements to transfer the payment. While I understand his experience on webchat took longer than he had hoped after he discovered the payment had been returned, if he had tried this route before making the payment, I am satisfied it would have become clear at that point, there might have been a problem.

It is not my role to tell businesses what must be contained on their websites or what payments they must accept but to see they act reasonably when returning payments, to ensure consumers like Mr R are not financially disadvantaged as a result. In this case the payment was returned to Mr R's account with the betting company within their standard five days and I am satisfied this is a reasonable time frame here. By doing this it allowed Mr R to make alternative arrangements regarding the payment, which he has since done.

Mr R has asked for an apology and a compensation payment from Revolut. I can see Revolut in their final response letter in September 2020 have apologised for the inconvenience caused without accepting they have made an error and the letter apologises for the wait time on the webchat and the overall inconvenience caused. While the offer of a one month's free premium plan is a modest token of apology, it is proportionate to the amount of the transaction and inconvenience caused to Mr R, given they hadn't acted unfairly when returning the payment for the reasons I have already mentioned. While Mr R will be disappointed with my decision, it follows I won't be asking anymore of Revolut.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr R to accept or reject my decision before 1 March 2021.

Barry White
Ombudsman