

The complaint

Mr S complains about Revolut Ltd's decision to review and subsequently close his account. Mr S is also unhappy that Revolut Ltd decided to return the money in his account to the original senders.

What happened

Mr S held a Revolut account. In May 2020, Mr S's account was flagged for review. During the review, Mr S's account was fully limited.

As part of the review, Revolut asked Mr S to provide information relating to the funds which had been paid into his account. Mr S couldn't provide all of the information they'd asked for. He explained to our service that one of the top-ups was from a pre-paid gift card which he'd disposed of; and another was from an individual who didn't have access to their account so couldn't provide any evidence.

In July 2020, Revolut finalised their review and decided to close Mr S's account. They returned the money which was left in the account to the original sources.

Mr S complained. Revolut responded to Mr S's complaint and confirmed that they were entitled to end the relationship with Mr S and return the money. Revolut also said they couldn't disclose any details regarding the review or why they made the decision they did. Mr S brought the complaint to our service. While Mr S's complaint was waiting to be investigated, Revolut offered Mr S a payment of £20 as a gesture of goodwill to resolve the complaint. Mr S rejected this offer.

Our investigator reviewed things and thought Revolut were entitled to take the actions they did – including closing the account and returning the money left in it back to source. She didn't ask Revolut to do anything differently. Mr S remained unhappy. He wanted to know why Revolut did what they did – and above all, wanted his money back.

As an agreement couldn't be reached, the complaint has been passed to me to review.

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.

Firstly, I'd like to make Mr S aware that our rules allow us to receive evidence in confidence. We may treat evidence from banks as confidential for a number of reasons – for example, if it contains security information, or commercially sensitive information. Some of the information Revolut has provided is information that we considered should be kept confidential.

Revolut are strictly regulated and must take certain actions in order to meet their legal and regulatory obligations. They're also required to carry out ongoing monitoring of new and existing relationships. That sometimes means they need to restrict customers' accounts – either in full or partially while they carry out their review. Having looked at what's happened,

I'm satisfied Revolut was complying with their legal and regulatory obligations when they reviewed Mr S's account. So, I can't fairly say they've done anything wrong.

I appreciate Revolut didn't tell Mr S about the review – but they don't have to. As part of their review, Revolut asked Mr S for detailed information about the money in his account and where it came from – which they're entitled to do under their obligations. I appreciate Mr S wasn't able to supply the information Revolut asked for – he says he had disposed of the gift card used to top-up, and the third-party individual who he needed information from couldn't access his own account to give Mr S the information. I recognise this would have left Mr S in a difficult situation – Revolut asked him for information he wasn't able to provide. But I've had to weigh up whether I think Revolut were fair in their actions. Having reviewed the full circumstances of this complaint, I feel Revolut's questions were wholly appropriate. Because of that, while I recognise Mr S's upset around this, I can't fairly conclude Revolut acted inappropriately.

Banks sometimes choose to end their relationship with customers. This can be due to a number of reasons, and a bank isn't obliged to give a reason to the customer. Just the same as if Mr S decided to stop banking with Revolut, he wouldn't have to explain why. Revolut can only close accounts in certain circumstances and if it is in the terms and conditions of the account. This service won't generally intervene in a bank's commercial discretion unless we think they've acted unfairly. Revolut have relied on, and complied with, the terms and conditions when closing Mr S's account and I've seen nothing to suggest that they've made an unfair decision. So, I can't fairly ask them to do anything differently.

Overall, Revolut were entitled to review, block and subsequently close Mr S's account. They asked for information to be provided to them relating to money paid into the account – and it is Revolut's duty to ensure their customer's money is protected. As Mr S couldn't satisfy Revolut's requirements, they decided to close the account and did so while complying with the terms and conditions. I'm sorry Mr S is left in the position he finds himself in – and I'm sorry I can't share more details with him on the reasons why. But in order to uphold his complaint and ask Revolut to do something to put things right, I'd need to be satisfied they did something wrong. And having considered everything, I can't reasonably say they did.

My final decision

For the reasons I've explained above, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr S to accept or reject my decision before 27 April 2022.

Hayley West
Ombudsman