

## The complaint

Mr V complains that Revolut Ltd (“Revolut”) won’t refund around £20,000 that he lost to a fake job scam.

## What happened

The details of this complaint are well known to both parties, so I won’t repeat everything again here. In brief, Mr V fell victim to a fake job scam after receiving a message via a messaging service - I will call the scammer ‘B’. B told Mr V that he would be paid for completing a number of tasks, but he would have to send funds to a crypto exchange to purchase crypto and then send crypto to B in order to unlock the funds that he earned.

So, over a couple of days, Mr V made the following card payments;

Transaction Number	Date	Payment amount	Type of Payment
1	2 February 2023	£55	Debit Card
2	2 February 2023	£320	Debit Card
3	3 February 2023	£200	Debit Card
4	3 February 2023	£400	Debit Card
5	3 February 2023	£100	Debit Card
6	4 February 2023	£102	Debit Card
7	4 February 2023	£50	Debit Card
8	4 February 2023	£1,885	Debit Card
9	4 February 2023	£5,500	Debit Card
10	4 February 2023	£400	Debit Card
11	4 February 2023	£4,500	Debit Card
12	4 February 2023	£4,600	Debit Card
13	4 February 2023	£1,400	Debit Card

Mr V realised he had been scammed after he was continually pressured into paying more money to B.

Our investigator rejected this complaint as they thought that as Mr V had used several crypto exchanges in the past then the above payments were not unusual. Mr V did not agree to this and therefore this case has been passed to me to issue a 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.

It isn't in dispute that Mr V has fallen victim to a scam here, nor that he authorised the payments he made to the scammer (where his funds were subsequently transferred on to the scammers from his crypto wallets). The payments were requested by him using his legitimate security credentials provided by Revolut, and the starting position is that banks ought to follow the instructions given by their customers, in order for legitimate payments to be made as instructed.

However, I've considered whether Revolut should have done more to prevent Mr V from falling victim to the scam, as there are some situations in which a bank should reasonably have had a closer look at the circumstances surrounding a particular transfer or unusual activity on an account. For example, if it was particularly out of character for that account holder.

In this instance Mr V had sent small amounts of funds to crypto exchanges in the past. He had also sent multiple payments in one day to crypto exchanges. Given this I don't think that the first 8 payments were unusual.

That said, payment 9 - taken into consideration with the 8 previous payments - was unusual and the pattern of payments is indicative of someone being scammed. 9 transactions to a crypto exchange in the space of two days is unusual, even for Mr V, especially as the value of the payments increased dramatically compared to what Mr V usually sent to a crypto exchange.

So I next need to consider what would have happened if Revolut did intervene. I can see that Revolut has asked Mr V in the past about payments made from his account. Mr V was not happy with this and said the following *"...but is my account and solely my decision on how I use my money"* he also went on to say *"Ok I understand that this is a security feature but it has to (sic) be an option to be overridden (sic). In this case the Revolut account doesn't help at all. If I make an official request to be able to spend my money in the way I want I can't accept an (sic) response that it's an automated system feature. You have to do better than that."*

Mr V also said *"As long as you operate transactions powered by Visa an international payment processing operator this defies the purpose of having a revolut (sic) card that you can use it internationally. You cannot stop or block a transaction without at least notify or request an authorisation from me as a customer. I will repeat myself again. I don't want that feature on my account. I would like to escalate this further with second line of management please."*

Given these interactions, and Mr V's very clear aversion to Revolut's previous security checks, I think that even if Revolut had contacted Mr V to check whether the transactions were legitimate and not related to a scam, I don't think that he would have been happy with the intervention. I also don't think he would have wanted to provide details to Revolut.

There were no credible warnings about B at the time. So if Mr V explained what he was doing, (although I don't find it likely that he would have), all Revolut could have done is provide a general crypto scam warning. In the circumstances, I am not satisfied that Mr V would have stopped making the transactions in question had he been given this warning. Mr V seemed completely convinced at this point that B was legitimate.

Overall, I think that Revolut should have intervened during the scam, but I don't think it's likely that the scam would have been stopped had it done so. So I can't reasonably ask Revolut to refund the transactions.

I've also thought about whether Revolut could have done more to attempt to recover the payments after Mr V reported the fraud. But given that the payments were made to a crypto exchange who provided what was paid for (crypto), I don't think that there were any means to recover the funds.

I appreciate this will likely come as a disappointment to Mr V, and I'm sorry to hear that he has lost a significant amount of money. However, in the circumstances, I do not consider it would be fair and reasonable to hold Revolut liable for his loss.

### **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 V to accept or reject my decision before 27 March 2024.

Charlie Newton  
**Ombudsman**