

The complaint

Mr P complains that Revolut Ltd (“Revolut”) didn’t do enough to protect him when he fell victim to a scam.

What happened

Between January and August 2023, Mr P made payments totalling £37,500 from his Revolut account to a cryptocurrency exchange. This money was ultimately lost to the scam.

Our investigator didn’t uphold Mr P’s complaint. While he thought that Revolut should have contacted Mr P before processing the first payment, he didn’t think this intervention would have made a difference overall. He noted that Mr P was encouraged by the scammer to mislead his account providers. Given the level of coaching, our investigator wasn’t persuaded an intervention or warning would have prevented the loss.

Mr P’s representative asked for the matter to be referred to a decision. It said Revolut is the expert in the relationship and that it should have intervened. It said this would either have negated its liability for the scam occurring by advising Mr P that he may be being scammed or would have prevented the scam. It said the lack of intervention from Revolut effectively gave Mr P assurance the transaction was legitimate.

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 taken into account longstanding regulatory expectations and requirements, and what I consider to be good industry practice, I agree Revolut ought to have been on the look-out for the possibility of fraud and made additional checks before processing payments in some circumstances.

I agree with the investigator and Mr P’s representative that Revolut should have intervened at the point of the first payment which was a high value transaction and was identifiably being paid to a cryptocurrency exchange. But I’m not persuaded that would have prevented his loss.

I say this because Mr P had been subject to social engineering and was being coached extensively by the scammer. Mr P and the scammer had been communicating since at least October 2022 – so around two and a half months prior to the start of the payments from Revolut. Within this chat, I can see that in November 2022, the scammer told Mr P not to tell another provider that he was planning to invest money or that anyone was helping him, as *“they are going to assume I know your account details and that I can magically steal your money”*. He was also directed not to mention the use of the screen sharing software he’d downloaded *“otherwise that will be an issue”*. He was also told to make several smaller payments, rather than one large one, to try to get the payments through.

I'm persuaded that, had there been an intervention, Mr P wouldn't have shared the information he was advised not to, or would have reverted to the scammer on how to answer any questions posed – and would likely have done so in such a way as to avoid alerting Revolut to what was really happening. I say this because it's clear Mr P trusted the scammer. They'd been speaking for a while before these payments were made and Mr P didn't question being asked to lie to his account providers. The conversation I've seen shows Mr P believed in the legitimacy of the scam to the extent that he was talking about withdrawing his pension to invest.

Mr P has undoubtedly been the victim of a cruel scam. But I can only uphold his complaint if I'm satisfied Revolut's failings made a material difference to what happened. For the reasons given, I'm not persuaded its failing did make a material difference.

My final decision

For the reasons given above, my final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr P to accept or reject my decision before 24 March 2025.

Melanie Roberts
Ombudsman