

The complaint

Ms M complains that Revolut Ltd (Revolut) is refusing to refund her the amount she lost as the result of a scam.

Ms M is being represented by a third party. To keep things simple, I will refer to Ms M throughout my decision.

What happened

The background of this complaint is well known to all parties, so I won't repeat what happened in detail.

In summary, Ms M had been looking for a job online when she received a message from what appeared to be a recruiter offering her an online role. After expressing interest Ms M was put in touch with the employer which went by the name of Absolut Group (X).

Ms M had to complete tasks online to receive a commission, she also had to pay funds into her account with X as part of the process.

Ms M was consistently asked for more payments to withdraw her earnings and realised she had fallen victim to a scam.

Ms M made the following payments in relation to the scam from her Revolut account:

<u>Payment</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1	5 December 2023	Individual 1	Transfer	£12.36
2	5 December 2023	Individual 2	Transfer	£66.50
3	5 December 2023	Individual 3	Transfer	£17.00
4	6 December 2023	Individual 2	Transfer	£183.12
5	6 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer	£233.45
6	6 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer	£38.44
7	6 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer	£8.48
8	7 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer	£1,007.00
9	7 December 2023	Individual 2	Transfer failed	£1,023.00
10	8 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer	£1,007.00
11	8 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer failed	£805.60
12	8 December 2023	Individual 4	Transfer	£808.00

Our investigator considered Ms M's complaint and didn't think it should be upheld. Ms M disagreed, so this complaint has been passed to me to decide.

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.

Recovering the payments Ms M made

Ms M made payments into the scam via transfer. When payments are made by this method the only option Revolut has to recover the payment is to contact the operator of the payee's account and request a refund of any remaining funds. This option is often unsuccessful as scammers tend to move funds from the account shortly after they are received.

I can see that Revolut did contact the operator of the payee's account but was unable to recover the payments.

With the above in mind, I don't think Revolut had any other reasonable options available to it to recover the payments Ms M made.

Should Revolut have reasonably prevented the payments Ms M made?

It has been accepted that Ms M authorised the payments that were made from her account with Revolut, albeit on X's instruction. So, the starting point here is that Ms M is responsible.

However, banks and other Payment Services Providers (PSPs) do have a duty to protect against the risk of financial loss due to fraud and/or to undertake due diligence on large transactions to guard against money laundering.

The question here is whether Revolut should have been aware of the scam and stepped into question Ms M about the payments she was making. And if it had questioned Ms M would it have been able to prevent the scam taking place.

The value of the payments Ms M made in relation to the scam were relatively low and were to different individual's accounts. It would not be reasonable for me to say Revolut should intervene on every payment its customers attempt to make especially when they are for lower values to what appear to be genuine accounts.

However, Revolut did intervene several times. For payments 5 and 8 Ms M was asked to confirm the reason for the payments and from a list selected 'something else'.

Ms M also took part in a live chat with Revolut when she attempted payment 11. During this conversation she told Revolut that she was making the payment to a friend who was having financial difficulties.

Ms M has told our service that she gave the answers she did for the payment reasons as she was being guided by X on what reasons to give.

Given the available information I think the interventions provided by Revolut were proportionate to the payments being attempted, but even if I were to accept that Revolut should have intervened further (which I don't) I think it's unlikely it would have been able to uncover the scam that was taking place. Ms M was clearly willing to give false information to Revolut provided to her by X to have the payments processed. This would have made it very difficult for Revolut to uncover the scam.

Revolut is therefore not responsible for Ms M's loss.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms M to accept or

reject my decision before 4 October 2024.

Terry Woodham
Ombudsman