

## **The complaint and what happened**

Mrs R complains Revolut Ltd won't reimburse money she lost when she fell victim to a scam.

Mrs R paid over £10,000 in September 2023, to what she was led to believe was an employment opportunity – completing tasks online to earn commission. Mrs R had to fund the account whenever it went into a negative balance, and she came to the realisation it was a scam when she ran out of funds and was advised by the scammer to take out a loan.

Our investigator didn't uphold a complaint, as although they found Revolut ought to have done more when asking questions about one of the payments, she wasn't persuaded that would have prevented Mrs R's loss. That was because at every stage of the scam, including when being provided with scam alerts and being questioned about payments, Mrs R sought guidance from the scammer on what to do. Given the level of coaching, our investigator wasn't persuaded a better intervention or warning would have prevented the loss.

Mrs R's representative asked for the matter to be referred to a decision. It said Revolut holds the responsibility of being the expert and professional in the relationship. It should have intervened fully, and just because Mrs R was being coached by the scammer that should not free Revolut from any liability.

## **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 agree with the investigator's conclusions for the following reasons:

- It isn't in dispute that Mrs R authorised the transactions in question. She is therefore initially presumed liable for the loss. However, Revolut is aware, taking longstanding regulatory expectations and requirements into account, and what I consider to be good industry practice at the time, that it should have been on the look-out for the possibility of fraud and made additional checks before processing payments in some circumstances.
- The very first payment as a result of the scam was for under £40. I'm not persuaded there is anything about that payment, even if going to crypto-currency, that ought to have looked suspicious to Revolut. However, the second payment made that same day, was for substantially more, at over £3,100. That payment did look suspicious to Revolut as it asked Mrs R a series of questions about it. And then it directed her to its chat, presumably because the answers Mrs R gave still concerned it.
- I do think Revolut could have questioned Mrs R better about the payment she was making, when directed to its chat. But I'm not persuaded that would have prevented her loss.
- When presented with a scam alert by the crypto-currency provider, Mrs R asked the scammer what to do. And when we queried why she had selected the payment purpose of 'paying friends and family' when that wasn't what she was doing, Mrs R explained that was how the scammer told her to respond. I'm therefore persuaded that even if better probing questions had been asked of Mrs R, she would have

reverted to the scammer on how to answer them. That's evident given Mrs R didn't answer any of Revolut's questions accurately because of that coaching from the scammer.

- I can only fairly ask Revolut to reimburse Mrs R if I find that any wrongdoing on its part caused her loss. That concept is one her representative should be very familiar with. Yet it has not sought to substantiate its arguments as to why better questioning would have resulted in Mrs R acting any differently given the level of coaching taking place.
- I'm also not persuaded there were any prospects of Revolut successfully recovering any funds, given the money was used to purchase crypto-currency from legitimate providers.

Mrs R has undoubtedly been the victim of a cruel scam - with coaching and social engineering at the very heart of it. I am sorry that this happened to her. However, in order for me to fairly and reasonably uphold this complaint, I need to be able to conclude that Revolut has not done all that it should have done, as detailed elsewhere, and that these 'failings' made a material difference to what happened to Mrs R. For the reasons given above, I do not, on the balance of evidence, fairly and reasonably conclude this and it follows that I don't uphold this complaint.

### **My final decision**

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

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs R to accept or reject my decision before 5 September 2024.

Claire Hopkins  
**Ombudsman**