

The complaint

Mrs B complains that Revolut Ltd “Revolut” didn’t do enough to protect her when she fell victim to a scam.

What happened

Mrs B made payments totalling around £30,000 between June and September 2023. The first set of payments, in June and July, were made by transfer to individuals to what she believed was an investment. And the second set of payments, in September, were made by debit card to a cryptocurrency exchange and these were thought to be linked to the recovery of her investment.

Realising she’d been the victim of a scam, Mrs B complained to Revolut. But it didn’t uphold her complaint. It said it had provided her with sufficient scam warnings.

Our investigator didn’t uphold the complaint. Although he found Revolut ought to have enquired better about some of the later payments, he wasn’t persuaded this would have prevented Mrs B’s loss. That was because when Revolut intervened earlier on in the scam and asked questions about payments, Mrs B sought guidance from the scammer on what to do. And even after Mrs B had seemingly discovered she’d fallen victim to a scam, she made further payments. Given the level of coaching, our investigator wasn’t persuaded a better intervention or warning would have prevented the loss.

Mrs B’s representative asked for the matter to be referred for decision. It said, in summary, all the payments should have been blocked and intervened with, the high volume of payments should have alerted Revolut to an issue and that, as the professional in the relationship, Revolut should have realised that Mrs B was falling victim to a recovery scam.

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.

Revolut did find some of the payments suspicious as it issued a number of warnings during the period the payments spanned, and asked questions on several occasions. When Mrs B attempted one of the initial payments – one of the transfers – Revolut contacted her through its chat function and asked her a series of questions to determine whether she was using a screen sharing application and whether she was advised to create a Revolut account after learning about an investment on social media. Mrs B answered “No” to all the questions, which wasn’t accurate and meant the payments would have appeared less concerning to Revolut. I also note that when Revolut asked Mrs B the purpose of the payments, she selected the option “*Something else*” for each one, despite the options of cryptocurrency and

investment being available. Revolut presented further warnings following this selection. I think Revolut did enough to intervene with the first set of payments.

At the end of July 2023, Mrs B seemingly came to the realisation she'd been the victim of a scam. Having received fake emails from genuine companies with various reasons why she needed to pay further fees, she started to query these with the genuine companies, including Revolut. And she was advised that the companies in question don't ask for the fees she'd been asked to pay. From her conversation with Revolut around this time, where she also included copies of the conversations between her and the scammer, she seemed to have realised she'd been scammed. And this led to Revolut making attempts to recover the funds, though it was unsuccessful.

However, following this, Mrs B made further payments to the scam in September 2023, through a cryptocurrency exchange, believing this would lead to the return of her funds.

I think Revolut should have intervened with some of the more substantial payment made in September, which were identifiably being made to a cryptocurrency exchange. But I'm not persuaded that an appropriate intervention would have prevented her loss.

I say this because Mrs B had been subject to social engineering and was being coached extensively by the scammer. I can see at the point that Revolut asked Mrs B the abovementioned questions for the first 'set' of payments, about whether she was using a screen sharing application etc., she told the scammer what she'd been asked and was advised to answer "No" to all the questions. She did this despite the fact that most, or even all, of them should have been answered "Yes" – she was using screen sharing software, had found the investment on social media, and had been told to create a Revolut account for investment purposes.

Mrs B has explained that the scammers were extremely convincing and she'd been made to believe that if she didn't follow instructions, she would be unable to access her investment, alongside the profit she'd made. The level of coaching led to her taking out loans through other providers, giving inaccurate reasons when asked the purpose of these.

Had Revolut intervened further, with the later payments, I've seen nothing that persuades me that Mrs B would have taken heed of their warnings. When questioned, albeit earlier in the scam, she provided inaccurate answers on the advice of the scammers, who she'd turned to for guidance. The payments Mrs B made believing she was 'recovering' her money were all to a cryptocurrency exchange, but she'd been manipulated into believing that any warnings from financial providers were with the intention of stopping her from investing and making money through cryptocurrency. Based on the evidence I've seen, I'm persuaded that Mrs B was so convinced by the scammers that she would have said what she needed to in order to make sure the payments were processed. And I think it's likely she would have turned to the scammers again if she'd been met with any difficulty in making payments.

Whilst Mrs B has undoubtedly been the victim of a cruel scam, I can only uphold her complaint if I'm satisfied Revolut's failings made a material difference to what happened. For the reasons given above, I'm not persuaded they did.

My final decision

For the reasons given above, I don't uphold this complaint against Revolut Ltd.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs B to accept or reject my decision before 22 April 2025.

Melanie Roberts
Ombudsman