

The complaint

Mr W complains that Revolut Ltd (Revolut) is refusing to refund him the amount he lost as the result of a scam.

Mr W is being represented by a third party. To keep things simple, I will refer to Mr W 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, Mr W started communicating with an individual that I will call X that he met online. Mr W exchanged messages via well known messaging applications and regular video calls. Mr W and X spoke about their personal lives and a romantic trusting relationship appeared to form.

X explained that she worked in cryptocurrency investment and persuaded Mr W that he could see good returns if he invested too.

Mr W was persuaded to download various apps and open an account with Revolut as part of the investment process. Mr W went on to make the following payments from his Revolut account:

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
1	22 June 2023	Cro	Debit Card	£1,029.90
2	25 June 2023	Cro	Debit Card	£1,029.90
3	26 June 2023	Cro	Debit Card	£2,059.80
4	26 June 2023	Cro	Debit Card	£2,059.80
5	27 June 2023	Cro	Debit Card	£2,059.80
6	28 June 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£1,000.00
7	29 June 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£20,000.00
8	30 June 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£12,000.00
9	30 June 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£8,500.00
10	1 July 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£20,000.00
11	3 July 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£5,000.00
12	4 July 2023	Noble Trading Pty Ltd	Transfer	£3,500.00

After making various payments Mr W contacted the trading platform he had been using and it was confirmed the wallet he was sending funds to was fake, and he had fallen victim to a scam.

Our Investigator considered Mr W's complaint and didn't think it should be upheld. Mr W 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.

It has not been disputed that Mr W has fallen victim to a cruel scam. The evidence provided by both Mr W and Revolut sets out what happened. What is in dispute is whether Revolut should refund the money Mr W lost due to the scam.

Recovering the payments Mr W made

Mr W made payments into the scam via his debit card and via transfer. Although the payments did not go directly to X instead, they were made to other cryptocurrency exchanges in return for cryptocurrency.

As there is no dispute that cryptocurrency was provided in exchange of the payments Mr W made, and it took further steps for the funds to end up in the hands of the scammer Revolut did not have any reasonable options available to it to recover the payments Mr W has disputed.

Should Revolut have reasonably prevented the payments Mr W made?

It has been accepted that Mr W authorised the payments that were made from his account with Revolut, albeit on X's instruction. So, the starting point here is that Mr W 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 intervened when the payments were made. And if it had intervened, would it have been able to prevent the scam taking place.

The first payments Mr W made in relation to the scam were going to a genuine business and were not of such a significant value that I would have expected Revolut to have concerns.

However, by the time Mr W made payment 4 he was making the second payment in the same day to a well-known cryptocurrency exchange, bringing the total value of payments that day to over £4,000 to the same payee. Considering the increased risks associated with this type of payment I would have expected Revolut to have concerns and to have intervened.

I think an appropriate intervention would have been for Revolut to have provided a warning to Mr W tailored to cryptocurrency investment. Although considering the type of scam Mr W was experiencing, essentially a romance scam/ investment scam, I don't think this would have made a difference as the circumstances would not have been covered.

When Mr W made payment 7 he was making a much more significant payment. I can see that Revolut did intervene at this stage and asked Mr W questions about the payment. Mr W answered the questions accurately and the scam was not uncovered, Revolut didn't probe further.

A further intervention took place when Mr W made payment 12 and he answered Revolut's questions accurately again.

From the questions Revolut asked it found that Mr W was buying cryptocurrency, he had two years' experience trading in crypto, he had not found an investment opportunity via social media, and he had not received any unsolicited communication asking him to move his funds.

I think Revolut could have asked Mr W more probing questions surrounding the payments, but I also think Mr W could have expanded on his answers considering the background to leading to the payments he was making. I don't have enough to say further questioning would have made a difference. I will explain why.

Mr W has provided the evidence he has available from the time of the scam, but all the messages are from before payment 7 took place. From the transcripts Mr W has provided it's clear Mr W did have concerns early on before making the payments and questioned X around meeting him before any investment took place. Despite not meeting Mr W, X was still able to convince him to part with a total of more than £70,000.

Given the above it is clear that the perceived relationship between Mr W and X was very strong and trusting. In addition to this Mr W and X declared their love for each other on numerous occasions and Mr W confirmed with X that she was in control of the investment and that he was a willing passenger.

I think it's likely that the relationship developed further following these messages as Mr W was then willing to part with substantial sums trusting X that the investment was genuine. With the lack of evidence available I am unable to say that X was not even more persuasive when higher amounts were requested, or that Mr W was likely to listen to a warning from Revolut over the advice of X who he appeared to have formed a trusting romantic relationship with.

With the above in mind, I think it's unlikely that a further intervention from Revolut would have deterred Mr W from making the payments he did in relation to the scam. So, I don't think Revolut missed an opportunity to prevent the scam, and it is not responsible for Mr W's loss.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr W to accept or reject my decision before 13 June 2025.

Terry Woodham
Ombudsman