

The complaint and background

Mr R complains that Revolut Ltd (“Revolut”) didn’t do enough to protect him when he fell victim to a scam, losing just under £10,000 in May 2023.

Our investigator didn’t uphold the complaint. Although she found Revolut ought to have enquired better about the payments, she wasn’t persuaded that would have prevented Mr R’s loss. That was because, even when Revolut got in touch with him after the payments had been made, Mr R provided inaccurate answers to its questions. Mr R was coached by the scammer around what to say, including being told not to mention trading or investing. Given the level of coaching, our investigator wasn’t persuaded a better intervention or warning would have prevented the loss.

Mr R’s representative asked for the matter to be referred to a decision. It said Revolut had all it needed to expose the scam. And it thought Revolut should have been concerned by Mr R sending almost £10,000 in one day for ‘shopping expenses’. So it maintains that the intervention was insufficient.

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 ought to have provided a written warning broadly covering general scam risks. But the payments were made without intervention. Instead, Revolut asked questions about the payments after they’d been made. But I’m not persuaded that a written warning, as required, would have prevented Mr R’s loss. Nor do I think that proportionate enquiries prior to the payments being processed, similar to those made after the payments, would have.

I say this because Mr R was being coached extensively by the scammer. This included how he should answer questions posed by Revolut about the payments he was making. He was told to give the payment purpose as being for a friend or family member and to say that he wasn’t being guided by someone he met online. And he did indeed provide inaccurate answers to Revolut.

While Revolut didn’t probe further around the reason given for payment – shopping expenses – I’m satisfied that, had it done so, Mr R would have continued reverting to the scammer on how to answer and would likely have done so in such a way as to avoid alerting Revolut to what was really happening. And, of particular relevance here is that it doesn’t appear payments were identifiably related to cryptocurrency.

Whilst Mr R has undoubtedly been the victim of a cruel scam, 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 it would have.

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 R to accept or reject my decision before 23 October 2024.

Melanie Roberts
Ombudsman