

The complaint

Mr B via a representative complains that Revolut Ltd (“Revolut”) won’t refund the money he lost to a fake job scam.

What happened

The details of this complaint are well known to both parties, so I won’t repeat everything again here.

In brief, Mr B fell victim to a fake job scam. I will call the scammer ‘B’. B told Mr B that he would be paid for completing a number of tasks, but he would have to send funds to B via a crypto exchange to unlock these tasks.

In total Mr B made the following payments via transfer with the exception of payment 2 which was a card payment.

Transaction Number	Date	Amount
1	27 June 2023	£323.82
2	28 June 2023	£80
3	29 June 2023	£10.36
4	29 June 2023	£305
5	29 June 2023	£293.17
6	29 June 2023	£800
7	29 June 2023	£500
8	30 June 2023	£7,219
9	30 June 2023	£1,730

Our investigator did not uphold this complaint. She thought that Revolut should have intervened and provided a tailored crypto warning when payment 8 was made but at the time such a warning would not have included job scams so the warning would not have stopped Mr B from carrying on with the transactions in question.

Mr B did not agree and therefore his complaint has been passed to me to issue a decision.

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 isn't in dispute that Mr B has fallen victim to a scam here, nor that he authorised the disputed payments he made to B. The payments were requested by him using his legitimate security credentials provided by Revolut, and the starting position is that Revolut ought to follow the instructions given by their customers, in order for legitimate payments to be made as instructed.

However, I've considered whether Revolut should have done more to prevent Mr B from falling victim to the scam, as there are some situations in which a bank should reasonably have had a closer look at the circumstances surrounding a particular transaction. For example, if it was particularly out of character for that account holder.

Given the size of the first 7 transactions I don't think that they were unusual enough to have prompted an intervention from Revolut. I note that there were multiple transactions in a day which in certain situations could be an indication that someone is being scammed. But in this instance given the size of them, I don't think that an intervention was merited. I also note that Revolut did provide warnings based on the payment purposes provided as I don't think that it needed to intervene it did more than I think it needed to.

In relation to payment 8. When Mr B attempted to send this larger payment, I would've expected Revolut to show him a tailored warning around cryptocurrency investment scams, as it could see he was sending a larger value payment. Revolut have said that it did provide this and has shown us an example of this warning. I think that this warning was sufficient given the circumstances.

Mr B's representative has said that it does not believe that the warning was sufficient. But even if the warning had gone into more detail about cryptocurrency scams, I'm not persuaded it would've prevented Mr B from losing his funds, after all, he wasn't investing in cryptocurrency. He understood he was using the cryptocurrency platform to deposit funds into his account to spend on unlocking tasks from his 'employer'. So, I'm satisfied that a more detailed warning wouldn't have stopped him from going ahead with the payments. The kind of risk Revolut would've been highlighting simply wouldn't relate to the situation he was in. Mr B's representative may argue that the warning should have related to job scams but these were not as common or as known about at this point in 2023 so I would not have expected a warning to have covered that type of scam at that time.

I also note that Revolut did provide a further warning for the final payment. Given its size I don't think that it needed to do anything more in relation to this payment.

So overall I don't think that Revolut is liable for Mr B's loss.

Recovery

I've also thought about whether Revolut could have done more to attempt to recover the payments after Mr B reported the fraud. Revolut are not part of the Contingent Reimbursement Model ("CRM"). Revolut said that it did attempt a chargeback for the card payment which was defended. I don't think it needed to do more in relation to this.

It also says that it contacted the receiving banks about the transfers but the funds had already been moved on. I have not seen evidence of this but given the timescales involved between the payments and when the scam was first reported I don't think it likely that the funds could have been recovered as generally they are moved on from the receiving accounts quickly.

I appreciate this will come as a disappointment to Mr B, and I'm sorry to hear he has been the victim a scam. However, I'm not persuaded that Revolut can fairly or reasonably be held liable for the losses that he said he incurred in these circumstances.

My final decision

For the reasons given above, I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 8 November 2024.

Charlie Newton
Ombudsman