

## The complaint

Mrs M complains about Revolut Ltd.

She says that Revolut didn't do enough to protect her when she became the victim of a scam.

## What happened

The details of what happened are well known to both parties, so I won't repeat them in detail here.

In summary, Mrs M fell victim to a scam after she came across an advert for cryptocurrency on social media.

Mrs M registered her interest through the advert and was contacted by an individual who explained that she would be investing in crypto via peer-to-peer payments to individuals who supposedly worked for B, a crypto exchange.

After speaking with the individual, Mrs M was persuaded to download Anydesk, and open an 'account' with the scammer. She was also told to open accounts with B and K (another crypto exchange) although these were never actually used, even though Mrs M assumed that her money had passed through these accounts. Mrs M was also provided access to a fake portal, where she could 'see' her investment.

Initially, things seemed to be going well, and she was able to make some small withdrawals – a common tactic for scammers to use to entice customers into paying more. However, when she wanted to make a withdrawal, she was told she needed to pay more money for various reasons, until it became clear that she was being scammed.

Below is a list of the transactions Mrs M made to the scammer. All payments were made to UK bank accounts held in different names.

Payment	Date	Payment type	Amount
1	23 October 2023	Faster payment	£1,500
2	1 November 2023	Faster payment	£1,000
	1 November 2023	Faster payment	£4,500 (Declined)
3	1 November 2023	Faster payment	£4,500
4	2 November 2023	Faster payment	£10,000
	2 November 2023	Credit to Mrs M	£10,000
	3 November 2023	Faster payment	£10,000 (Declined)
	3 November 2023	Faster payment	£10,000 (declined)
5	3 November 2023	Faster payment	£10,000
		<b>Total loss</b>	<b>£17,000</b>

Once the scam had been uncovered, Mrs M made a complaint to Revolut, and said it should have done more to alert her to the risks of what she was doing and provided her with a warning.

Revolut didn't uphold her complaint. So, she brought her complaint to this Service.

Our Investigator looked into things and thought that Revolut could have done more than it did. They said that Revolut should have noticed something was amiss when Mrs M made payment 4 (which was actually returned to her) and so it should refund Mrs M the loss from after this point, however, they also said that Mrs M wasn't as careful as she should have been, and so responsibility for the loss should be shared equally between Mrs M and Revolut, resulting in £5,000 being returned to Mrs M (plus interest).

Revolut agreed to this outcome – but Mrs M and her representatives did not. They felt that a fairer outcome would have been for Revolut to have intervened on payment 3.

As no informal resolution was reached, the complaint has been passed to me to make a final 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.

Having done so, I have decided to uphold this complaint in part – and agree with the outcome reached by our investigator for broadly the same reasons. I know this will be disappointing for Mrs M, so I'll explain why.

As Revolut has already agreed to the suggested remedy suggested by our Investigator, I won't go into detail about where it went wrong – instead, I will focus on why I don't think that Revolut needed to do any more than it did on payment 3.

Revolut has shown that Mrs M opened the account for the purpose of making 'transfers' – so the activity on the account was in line with what it would have expected. And while the first 3 payments were to different payees, I don't think that the amounts in question were large or unusual enough for Revolut to have had any concerns at this point that Mrs M may have been at risk of financial harm. While Mrs M thought she was purchasing crypto currency, this information wasn't available to Revolut – instead the payments were made to other UK bank accounts, which was in line with the account opening purpose.

Revolut did initially block the payment of £4,500 and spoke with Mrs M about it through its app. Mrs M explained that she understood the risk and was happy to continue – but it appears that the payment timed out, so Mrs M made another payment request.

Revolut also asked Mrs M some scam related questions when she was sending the first three payments. While I would have expected it to have done more for payment 4, at this point, I think that these questions were proportionate to the risk level identified at this point. I also note that one of these questions (for each payment) was 'Have you been asked to download any software? Scammers might ask you to install software to view your screen, spy on your personal details and help you set up your investment', and gave examples including 'Anydesk'.

Mrs M said that she had not done so, and also confirmed that she wasn't being guided by anyone – but this was not the case as she had downloaded Anydesk and was being guided by the scammer with the supposed investment. Therefore I don't think her answers gave

Revolut any cause for concern, and I think it was reasonable for it to process the payment without carrying out further checks.

I also think that it was fair for Mrs M to equally share responsibility for the loss she occurred after payment four debited her account and was subsequently returned to her (which amounts to £10,000 in total), as I don't think she was as careful as she should have been with her money.

The opportunity was found via social media, and all communication took place via social media or text, and there was no official information provided which evidenced the legitimacy of the investment. I also think that the suggested returns were too good to be true – and the reasons given for payments to 'release' her supposed profits were flimsy, and the payments themselves were more than Mrs M had originally paid.

I am very sorry for the situation Mrs M now finds herself in – I know that she has lost a lot of money to a cruel and manipulative scam. But the loss has been caused by the scammers themselves, not Revolut. And while I agree (as does Revolut) that it could have done more, I don't think it needed to do any more than it did for the first 3 payments.

### **Putting things right**

Revolut Ltd should refund Mrs M 50% of the losses she has occurred after payment 4 – I calculate this to be £5,000.

On top of this, it should also pay Mrs M 8% simple interest from the date the transaction was made until settlement (less any lawfully deductible tax).

### **My final decision**

I uphold this complaint in part. Revolut Ltd should put things right as set out above.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs M to accept or reject my decision before 3 January 2025.

Claire Pugh  
**Ombudsman**