

The complaint

Miss B complains that Revolut Ltd (Revolut) is refusing to refund her the amount she lost as the result of a scam.

Miss B has previously been represented by a third party. To keep things simple, I will refer to Miss B 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, Miss B found an advertisement on social media that appeared to be endorsed by well-known public figures advertising cryptocurrency with a company I will call "X". The advertisement promised a good return from a relatively low deposit of £250.

Interested in the opportunity Miss B clicked on the link provided and was directed to what appeared to be a genuine website with all the features she had come to expect from a professional business. Miss B completed an online form with her details and received a call from X almost immediately. Miss B was assigned what X described as a "Financial Advisor" who would assist her with trading.

Miss B then started to communicate with X via a well-known messaging application. X appeared very professional and appeared to have a wealth of knowledge around trading. X was able to answer all of Miss B's questions with confidence.

Miss B was required to download screen sharing software so that she could be assisted by X. Miss B provided various forms of identification as requested and a trading account was opened for her. In addition to this Miss B was instructed to open an account with Revolut as X told her Revolut was easier to deal with when dealing with cryptocurrency.

Miss B was given access to her own trading account protected by a username and password, X used the screensharing software to introduce Miss B to the features of the trading platform which all appeared to be very professional.

Miss B's investment appeared to be doing well, and X encouraged her to make further payments to capitalise on market conditions which she did. X then suggested that Miss B should take out an insurance policy which would allow her to withdraw funds from the investment. On advice of X Miss B applied for a loan to cover the cost of the insurance and was guided through how to answer the loan questionnaire.

At this stage Miss B discussed the investment and the loan with her partner, and it became clear she had fallen victim to a scam.]

The following payments were made in relation to the scam from Miss B's Revolut account:

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
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1	31 August 2023	Bifinity	Debit Card	£500.00
2	31 August 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£500.00
3	13 September 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,860.00
4	19 September 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£1,600.00
5	19 September 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£1,600.00
6	19 September 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£1,800.00
7	19 September 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£1,900.00
8	19 September 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£1,830.00
9	19 September 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£900.00
10	20 September 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£50.25
11	20 September 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,005.00
12	20 September 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,507.50
13	20 September 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,950.00
14	21 September 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£787.00
15	21 September 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,005.00
16	21 September 2023	Zen	Transfer	£3,500.00
17	21 September 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,995.00
18	26 September 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,507.50
19	26 September 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,005.00
20	26 September 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,000.00
21	26 September 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,980.00
22	2 October 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£1,000.00
23	2 October 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£800.00
24	2 October 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£600.00
25	2 October 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£500.00
26	2 October 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£500.00
27	2 October 2023	Binance	Debit Card	£600.00
28	2 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,500.00
29	2 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,507.50
30	4 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,507.50
31	4 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,005.00
32	4 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£402.00
33	4 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£402.00
34	4 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,900.00
35	4 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,780.00
36	4 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,301.00
37	5 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,507.50
38	5 October 2023	Zen	Debit Card	£1,005.00
39	5 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,490.00
40	5 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£2,000.00
41	6 October 2023	Miss B	Transfer	£10.00

Our Investigator considered Miss B's complaint and didn't think it should be upheld. Miss B 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 Miss B has fallen victim to a cruel scam. The evidence provided by both Miss B and Revolut sets out what happened. What is in dispute is whether Revolut should refund the money Miss B lost due to the scam.

Recovering the payments Miss B made

Payments were made into scam via debit card and transfer. I think it's most likely Miss B authorised the payments. When payments are made by card the only recovery option available to Revolut is to request a chargeback.

The payments that were made by debit card were made to legitimate cryptocurrency exchanges and cryptocurrency was provided in exchange of the payments. As there is no dispute that cryptocurrency was provided in exchange of the payments, and it took further steps for the funds to be sent to the scammer any chargeback attempt would have no prospect of success.

The payments made by transfer went to an account in Miss B's own name so if any funds did remain, they would remain within Miss B's control and there would be nothing to recover.

With the above in mind, I don't think Revolut had any reasonable options available to it to recover the payments Miss B had disputed.

Should Revolut have reasonably prevented the disputed payments from being made?

Although there is some dispute over how the payments were made, I think it is most likely that Miss B authorised the payments and was aware of them taking place at the time. So, the starting point here is that Miss B 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 being made. And if it had intervened, would it have been able to prevent the scam taking place.

The first payments made from Miss B's account in relation to the scam were relatively low in value, but by the time Miss B made payment 5 I think Revolut should have had concerns, and it should have intervened. Miss B was making payments to a well-known cryptocurrency exchange and by the time she made payment 5 had sent a total of more than £3,000 in the same day.

I can see Revolut did Intervene as I would have expected it to have, even earlier in the scam.

When Miss B made payment 3 she was required to give a reason for the payment and was provided with general warning screens. Miss B selected the payment reason to be "transfers to my other account"

Miss B was asked the following questions and gave the following answers:

Q. Is anyone telling you how to answer these questions? Is someone telling you which options to choose or telling you this is urgent?

A. No, I'm not being assisted through this questionnaire

Q. Why are you making this transfer?

A. Transfer to my other account

Q. What kind of account? This helps us identify the level of risk

A. Checking or savings account in another bank

Q. Have you been asked to install software? Scammers might ask you to install software (e.g. Anydesk) to view your screen, spy on your personal details and help you set up your investment account.

A. No, I was not asked to install any software

Miss B then agreed to the following statement:

“Revolut has warned me that this payment is suspicious, and I understand the risk of losing my money”.

From the information above it's clear Miss B provided incorrect answers to Revolut's questions which would have made it difficult for Revolut to uncover the scam was taking place. Had Miss B answered honestly it is most likely that Revolut would have uncovered the scam as the scam Miss B experienced was relatively common with features that would have been highlighted had honest answers been provided.

Revolut intervened in the same way when Miss B made payment 13 and Miss B again gave incorrect responses.

Miss B has also told us that when she applied for a loan to finance a payment related to the scam X walked her through how to complete the loan application form and she had complete trust in X.

With the above in mind, I think it's clear that Miss B was taken in by the X and had complete trust in X to the extent she was willing to provide false information to well established financial businesses to loan funds and to make payments.

I don't have enough to say that had Revolut intervened further than it did that Miss B would have provided any more honest answers to any questions it may have asked. I think its most likely that she would have continued to be guided by X and answered any questions as directed by it.

Giving false information to Revolut made it difficult for Revolut to uncover the scam that was taking place and would have continued to do so. With this in mind, I don't think Revolut missed an opportunity to uncover the scam, and it is therefore not responsible for her loss.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss B to accept or reject my decision before 6 June 2025.

Terry Woodham
Ombudsman