DRN-5210653

The complaint

Mr C is complaining that Revolut Ltd didn't do enough to prevent him from making payments to a scam.

The complaint is brought on his behalf by a professional representative, but I'll mainly refer to Mr C here.

What happened

Both parties are familiar with the circumstances, so I'll only summarise them here.

Mr C made six payments totalling over £7,000 between 3 February 2024 and 5 February 2024, to what he was led to believe was an employment opportunity – completing tasks online to earn commission. Five of the payments were made by debit card to a money transfer service, and one was made by transfer to an individual. Mr C realised he'd been scammed when he continued to receive high commission tasks which involved him making further payments without receiving withdrawals. He reported the scam to Revolut in March 2024 and when Revolut didn't agree to refund him, he referred the complaint to us.

Our Investigator didn't uphold the complaint, as although she found Revolut ought to have done more to establish the circumstances of the fifth payment Mr C made to the scam, she wasn't persuaded that would have prevented further loss. This was because she didn't think an intervention or warning would have stopped Mr C from making payments to the scam.

Mr C's representative asked for his complaint to be referred to an Ombudsman for a decision. It said that Revolut ought to have intervened by speaking to Mr C directly, and this would have made him realise he was falling victim to a scam.

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 agree with the investigator's conclusions for the following reasons:

- It isn't in dispute that Mr C authorised the transactions in question. He is therefore presumed liable for the loss in the first instance. However, Revolut is aware, taking longstanding regulatory expectations and requirements into account, and what I consider to be good industry practice at the time, that it should have been on the look-out for the possibility of fraud and made additional checks before processing payments in some circumstances.

- I agree with the investigator that by the fifth payment Mr C made to the scam Revolut ought to have had some concerns about what was happening here. I say this because Mr C had made two payments to the money transfer service within the space of two minutes, with the total value of the payments made in quick succession exceeding £3,000.

- I'd have expected Revolut to intervene by asking a series of automated questions designed to narrow down the type of scam risk associated with the payment Mr C was making. And if it had any concerns about how Mr C answered its questions, it ought to have contacted Mr C directly to discuss the payment (in Revolut's process, this would have been through asking him to join an in-app chat before it allowed the payment to be made). If Mr C had answered Revolut's questions honestly, this ought to have led to him receiving a warning tailored to the sort of scam he was experiencing – in this case, an employment scam.

- However, I'm not persuaded that an intervention from Revolut in the way I've described would have prevented Mr C's loss, because I don't think Mr C would have been open about the circumstances of the payments such that Revolut could reasonably have identified that he was falling victim to an employment scam and provided a relevant tailored warning.

- I say this because Mr C also made payments to the scam from his account with another business before making the disputed payments from Revolut. The other business asked him questions about six of the payments he made, and Mr C said he was "*sending money* to *friends and family*." He also said that he had met the person he was paying in real life and hadn't received any messages unexpectedly asking for money.

- When I asked why Mr C selected this payment purpose when that wasn't what he was doing, Mr C said he couldn't recall being asked the questions. But any intervention from Revolut would have asked Mr C similar questions about what he was making the payment for, and I've seen nothing to make me think Mr C would have answered Revolut's questions differently to how he answered the questions from the other business shortly before he began to make the payments from Revolut. So, I don't think it's likely any proportionate intervention from Revolut would have resulted in it identifying the type of scam Mr C was experiencing, such that it could have given him a relevant tailored warning which would have potentially resonated with him and prevented him from making further payments.

- I would add that even if Revolut had intervened and Mr C had answered its questions honestly so that Revolut could give him a relevant scam warning, I'm not persuaded this would have made a difference to his decision to make the payments. I say this because I can also see that Mr C had previously been involved in what he viewed to be a similar scheme, and he tells the scammer he made good money from it. He also expresses that he's willing to get involved in what he believes to be pyramid scheme. It's true that at the time I'd have expected Revolut to have intervened, he's beginning to question if he's going to be able to make withdrawals from this scheme, but due to his previous experience I don't think a scam warning from Revolut would have been what prompted him to reconsider what he was doing here.

- I've thought about whether Revolut could have done more to recover Mr C's funds once the scam was reported. Revolut didn't attempt a chargeback on Mr C's debit card payments to the money transfer service, but as it's unlikely any chargeback would have been successful (because the money transfer service apparently provided the service Mr C had paid for) I don't think this was unreasonable. It's not clear that the transfer Mr C made could have been recovered by Revolut as it was a 'push-to-card' payment and there's no clear mechanism for this type of payment to be recovered, but in any case because the scam wasn't reported until over a month after the transfer was made, I think it's very unlikely any funds would have remained even if it had been possible for Revolut to attempt to recover them.

I’m sorry to disappoint Mr C. But I’ve not found that Revolut could reasonably have prevented him from making the payments to the scam. So, it wouldn’t be fair or reasonable for me to ask Revolut to refund them.

My final decision

My final decision is that I’m not upholding Mr C’s complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I’m required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 18 September 2025.

Helen Sutcliffe
Ombudsman