

The complaint

Mr S complains Revolut Ltd won't refund the full amount of money he lost to a scam.

What happened

The background to this complaint is well-known to both parties, so I won't repeat it in detail here. But in summary and based on the submissions of both parties, I understand it to be as follows.

Mr S complains that he sent several payments to what he thought was a legitimate investment after seeing an advertisement on a social media site. Mr S watched his money grow, but it was when he told to pay fees to release his money that he realised he had been scammed. So, Mr S logged a complaint with Revolut.

Revolut looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. So, Mr S brought his complaint to our service.

Our investigator looked into the complaint but also didn't uphold it. Our investigator found Revolut intervened, spoke to Mr S, and gave him relevant and proportionate warnings - but he decided to make the payments anyway. She also found that Mr S wasn't giving accurate answers to the questions Revolut asked him.

Mr S and his representative didn't agree with the investigator's view.

As no formal resolution could be reached, the complaint has been passed to me for 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.

I'm very aware that I've summarised this complaint briefly, in less detail than has been provided, and in my own words. No discourtesy is intended by this. Instead, I've focussed on what I think is the heart of the matter here. If there's something I've not mentioned, it isn't because I've ignored it. I haven't. I'm satisfied I don't need to comment on every individual point or argument to be able to reach what I think is the right outcome. Our rules allow me to do this. This simply reflects the informal nature of our service as a free alternative to the courts.

Where the evidence is incomplete, inconclusive, or contradictory, I must make my decision on the balance of probabilities – that is, what I consider is more likely than not to have happened in the light of the available evidence and the wider surrounding circumstances.

In line with the Payment Services Regulations (PSR) 2017, consumers are generally liable for payments they authorise. Revolut is expected to process authorised payment instructions

without undue delay. As an Electronic Money Institution (EMI), they also have long-standing obligations to help protect customers from financial harm from fraud and scams. However, there are many payments made by customers each day and it's not realistic or reasonable to expect an EMI to stop and check every payment instruction. There's a balance to be struck between identifying payments that could potentially be fraudulent, and minimising disruption to legitimate payments.

Having considered the value of the payments Mr S sent, I'm satisfied the second payment of £3,231 ought to have triggered Revolut's automatic payment checking systems. This took the total value that day to £5371 and suggested Mr S might be at a heightened risk of financial harm due to fraud or a scam. So, I'm persuaded Revolut reasonably ought to have been concerned.

Given the value and the identifiable risk, I'm satisfied a proportionate intervention would have been an automated series of questions to establish more around the purpose of the payment. Revolut should then have given a tailored warning relevant to the answers Mr S gave to its questions – and I can see that it did this.

When Mr S was presented with the questions, instead of choosing “as part of an investment,” which was an accurate description of what Mr S thought he was doing, he chose to select “something else.”

It's worth mentioning that Revolut relies upon accurate information being given by the individual completing the questions to provide accurate warnings based on the selected payment purpose. So, if Mr S had given the correct purpose, he would have been provided with a suitable and more appropriate tailored warning. As part of the questionnaire, Mr S said he wasn't being guided and hadn't been asked to download any screen sharing software, both of which we know wasn't accurate. Therefore, I do not think Revolut could have prevented his losses.

As well as giving Mr S some automated questions and warnings, it did take Mr S into a live chat with an advisor when he made a larger payment of £11,000.

The Revolut advisor then stated that Mr S had confirmed through its automated questioning that nobody had told him his account was not safe, is guiding him through the questions or asked him to install any software or told him to ignore any warnings. The advisor asked Mr S if this were correct, and whether he would like to cancel the payment while he double checked the details – Mr S confirmed he still wanted it made.

In response to the investigators view, Mr S and his representative said the intervention wasn't effective as it was presented in one block of questioning. I've thought about this point carefully, but it doesn't change my decision. Mr S was presented with an opportunity to tell the advisor the details of what was happening, but as well as not giving an accurate response, chose not to. I've also not seen anything that suggests Mr S would've given different answers to what he had done already if further questioning had taken place.

The consequence of Mr S's actions stopped Revolut from being able to uncover the scam or prevent his loss. Even if Revolut had asked further questions, I'm not persuaded that Mr S would have been open and honest with his answers to those either. I think it's most likely he would have given answers that would have alleviated Revolut's concerns.

Recovery

Revolut were able to recover a partial reimbursement of £1,976.66, and this credited Mr S's account. I'm satisfied that's all Revolut could do in the circumstances of the complaint.

My final decision

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 S to accept or reject my decision before 18 June 2025.

Tom Wagstaff
Ombudsman