

## **The complaint**

Mrs A complains Revolut Ltd didn't do enough to protect her when she fell victim to a job scam.

## **What happened**

Mrs A has an account with Revolut and accounts elsewhere too including an account with a bank who I'll refer to as "S" throughout the rest of this decision.

Mrs A says she was contacted by someone claiming to be from a recruitment company who asked her if she'd be interested in a remote job. She says she was told the job would involve completing tasks and that she'd receive commission and income. Mrs A says she had just uploaded her CV as she'd been looking for work, so the contact wasn't unexpected. She expressed interest and was shown how to do the job – including how to take on and complete tasks which involved cryptocurrency – and at first she received returns. Mrs A says that she then started to be asked to pay increasingly large amounts in order to be able to complete her tasks. She says that between 29 June 2023 and 4 July 2023 she made sixteen payments to cryptocurrency totalling just over £40,000. Mrs A says she used savings and also borrowed from friends and family. Mrs A says she realised she'd been scammed when the scammers "kept on asking for more money" and "it seemed like the goal post kept on changing". She contacted Revolut to say she'd been scammed.

Revolut looked into Mrs A's claim and said that its systems had identified the fact that she'd made payments to three new beneficiaries in the course of the scam, and that she'd been asked whether or not she knew and trusted the beneficiary. In addition, Revolut said that it had attempted chargebacks in relation to the card payments she'd made. And has also taken steps to see if it could recover any of her money, which hadn't been successful. For those reasons, Revolut said that it couldn't refund her. Mrs A was unhappy with Revolut's response and complained to our service.

One of our investigators looked into Mrs A's complaint and said that Revolut should have been concerned when Mrs A attempted to make a £5,000 to cryptocurrency on 2 July 2023 as that took the total amount she'd sent to cryptocurrency to £10,000 in one day. They said that Revolut would have uncovered the fact that Mrs A was falling victim to a job scam had it intervened and that she would have stopped making payments towards the scam. However, our investigator also thought that Mrs A should share responsibility. So, they recommended that Revolut refund 50% of Mrs O's payments from 2 July 2023 having deducted returns. Mrs A accepted our investigator's recommendation. Revolut didn't. Ultimately Revolut asked for Mrs A's complaint to be referred to an ombudsman for a decision. Her complaint was, as a result, passed to me.

## **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.

Last month I issued a provisional decision in which I said the following:

*"In this case I'm satisfied that Mrs A made sixteen payments – a mixture of card payments and transfers – to three different well-known cryptocurrency providers between 29 June 2023 and 4 July 2023. Three of the first four payments were under £100 and the other one was under £1,000. I wouldn't have expected any of those payments to be concerning to Revolut. The fifth payment – on 1 July 2023 – was, however, for £3,000 and that was followed by another payment for £5,000 the following day. Our investigator thought that Revolut should have been concerned when Mrs A made a second payment for £5,000 on 2 July 2023 as that took the amount she'd sent to cryptocurrency to £10,000 that day and £13,000 over a two-day period.*

*I agree with our investigator that the second payment on 2 July 2023 should have been a cause of concern for Revolut given that it was for £5,000 and identifiably going to cryptocurrency given what it fairly and reasonably should have known about multi-stage fraud at that time. I'd potentially go further and say the £3,000 payment the day before should have been a cause for concern. I also agree that Revolut should have given Mrs A a tailored written warning covering the key features of cryptocurrency investment scams at this stage. Our investigator thought that would have uncovered the scam. I don't necessarily agree, and I'll explain why.*

*Revolut has said that Mrs A was grossly negligent in this case and has given examples. For instance, the returns were too good to be true and it made no sense having to pay an employer so much money to earn money. In this case, I can see that Mrs A carried out a number of checks – for example, she checked the company was genuine (her checks suggested it was, but it appears the scammers spoofed a genuine company), checked online for reviews and found nothing negative and she had been added to a group chat with other people who seemed to be doing well and said the business was legitimate. I also agree that there were a number of red flags. I can, however, see from the chat between Mrs A and the scammer that as early as 2 July 2023 her husband was telling her that she was being scammed. I can also see on that day that she asked the scammer for help because Revolut was blocking her payments and that she even tried another bank. She speaks to the scammer about other options and ways to get round the blocks, including using a different cryptocurrency merchant and even using her husband's accounts. And she again speaks to the scammers when Revolut says it's going to block any more payments of the same kind on 4 July 2023. It isn't until the following day that Mrs A appears to give up on the idea of sending any more money to the scammer and that is, it seems, because she had run out of money and so had everyone else that she'd borrowed from. At that point Revolut had also restricted her account as it wanted to check the source of the funds coming into her account. I can also see that when Mrs A was transferring money from her account with S that she said she was "paying a family member or friend" and was "paying rent or bills" and that she was "sending them a gift". She went on to say that she'd visited the property and that she'd paid the person before. In the chat with the scammers, it's clear that Mrs A knows S had a particularly strict approach to cryptocurrency, so it seems these answers were attempts to get round any restrictions they might have in place. I'm satisfied, based on what I've seen, that Mrs A wasn't honest about what she was doing because she was under the scammer's spell and was being guided how to get round restrictions. I'm also satisfied, therefore, that even if Revolut had given a tailored written warning and later on had tried human intervention it would not have made a difference. In the circumstances, I don't think it's fair to hold Revolut liable for any of Mrs A's losses as I don't agree it could have prevented them."*

Both parties were invited to reply to my provisional decision – only Mrs A's representatives did. They said that they strongly disagreed with my provisional decision, saying that Revolut had failed to intervene effectively, and that Mrs A selected the wrong payment reason shouldn't absolve Revolut of its duties to protect her. They said the payments were very

unusual and that there were lots of red flags, and Revolut should have done more to help.

In my provisional decision, I said that I thought Revolut should have gone further. In particular, I said that I thought Revolut should have given Mrs A a tailored written warning covering the key features of cryptocurrency investment scams. I also said that I would have expected Revolut to have potentially done so earlier than our investigator had recommended. In other words, I agree that Revolut should have done more here. In my provisional decision, however, I went on to say why I didn't think a tailored written warning or human intervention would have made a difference. And it was on that basis that I said I didn't think it would be fair to hold Revolut liable for any of Mrs A's losses as I didn't agree it could have prevented them. I remain of that view, for the reasons I gave in my provisional decision – on which Mrs A's representatives haven't commented – that Revolut couldn't have prevented Mrs A's losses in this case. I appreciate that this will be a disappointment to Mrs A who has clearly been the victim of a cruel scam.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I'm not upholding this complaint for the reasons I've given.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs A to accept or reject my decision before 12 February 2025.

Nicolas Atkinson  
**Ombudsman**