

The complaint

Mr B complains that Revolut Ltd won't reimburse him after he fell victim to a job scam.

Mr B is professionally represented in bringing his complaint, but for ease of reading I'll refer to all submissions as being made by Mr B directly.

What happened

On 28 January 2025, I issued my provisional decision on this complaint. I wanted to give both parties a chance to provide any more evidence and arguments before I issued my final decision. That provisional decision forms part of this final decision and is copied below.

Mr B has explained that in around January 2023 he was contacted by an individual claiming to offer a flexible working opportunity in digital marketing. Mr B was told that he'd need to complete 40 tasks promoting products to earn commission, which could be withdrawn once the tasks were completed. Unfortunately, unknown to Mr B at the time, he was in fact in communication with a fraudster.

Mr B says he did initially question the legitimacy of the firm, but was reassured when he was able to successfully complete his first 40 tasks and withdraw his 'commission'. He says he also researched the firm online and found nothing untoward.

Mr B was instructed to make deposits towards the scam from his Revolut account, in order to 'top up' his work account. In total, Mr B made the following card payments from his Revolut account to a cryptocurrency account, which was then passed on to the fraudster:

Payment number	Date/time	Payment value
	24/01/2023 21:16	£50.93 credit
1	24/01/2023 22:34	£84.80
2	25/01/2023 16:24	£60.00
3	25/01/2023 16:56	£500.00
	25/01/2023 16:18	£703.35 credit
4	25/01/2023 17:32	£700.00
5	25/01/2023 17:57	£800.00
6	25/01/2023 18:23	£2,500.00
7	26/01/2023 00:49	£3,250.00
8	26/01/2023 15:40	£1,000.00
9	26/01/2023 16:17	£4,000.00
10	28/01/2023 10:37	£5,000.00
11	28/01/2023 10:38	£4,000.00
12	28/01/2023 10:41	£209.00
13	29/01/2023 16:29	£5,000.00
14	29/01/2023 16:30	£5,000.00
15	29/01/2023 16:31	£5,000.00
16	29/01/2023 16:33	£2,800.00
17	07/02/2023 15:52	£2,290.00
	07/02/2023 14:56	£2,137.03 credit
18	07/02/2023 15:59	£2,287.00

When Mr B kept being asked to make further payments of increasingly high values, he realised he'd fallen victim to a scam, and contacted Revolut to make a claim. Revolut considered Mr B's claim and investigated it as a chargeback. However, as the service was considered as provided by the cryptocurrency firm, no refund was provided.

Mr B remained unhappy and referred his complaint to our service. An investigator considered the complaint and upheld it in part. He thought that by the time Mr B made payment seven towards the scam, the payments were out of character for his account, as well as identifiably being made to a cryptocurrency provider – known for carrying a higher risk of fraud. He therefore considered that by this point, Revolut ought to have provided a tailored written warning about cryptocurrency scams, which he considered would have resonated with Mr B and stopped him from making further payments.

However, he also considered Mr B didn't do enough to protect himself – as he thought he ought to have further questioned the job opportunity presented to him and whether it sounded plausible. He therefore thought both parties should be equally liable for Mr B's losses from payment seven onwards, with Revolut refunding 50% of these losses.

Mr B agreed with the investigator's view but Revolut didn't. The complaint has therefore been referred to me for a decision. As part of my further investigation I've obtained additional information, including evidence from Mr B's other banking providers, where Mr B sent funds to his Revolut account from.

What I've provisionally 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 want to start by saying how very sorry I am to hear of the impact this scam has had on Mr B. I want to assure Mr B that I don't underestimate the immense strain this must have placed on him. However, my role is purely to look at the actions of Revolut and whether it

ought to have done more to protect Mr B in the circumstances. Having done so, while I'm sorry to disappoint Mr B, I don't intend to uphold his complaint. I'll explain why.

In deciding what's fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of a complaint, I am required to take into account relevant: law and regulations; regulators' rules, guidance and standards; codes of practice; and, where appropriate, what I consider to have been good industry practice at the time.

In broad terms, the starting position at law is that an Electronic Money Institution (EMI) such as Revolut is expected to process payments and withdrawals that a customer authorises it to make, in accordance with the Payment Services Regulations (in this case the 2017 regulations) and the terms and conditions of the customer's account.

However, taking into account longstanding regulatory expectations and requirements and what I consider to have been good industry practice at the time, Revolut should in January 2023 fairly and reasonably have been on the look-out for the possibility of fraud and have taken additional steps, or made additional checks, before processing payments in some circumstances.

Should Revolut have fairly and reasonably made further enquiries before processing Mr B's payments?

It isn't in dispute that Mr B has fallen victim to a cruel scam here, nor that he authorised the disputed payments he made from his account, but I've thought about whether Revolut should have reasonably intervened any further than it did and if so, what impact this intervention would have had.

Revolut would have been aware that Mr B's payments to the scam were being made to a cryptocurrency provider and it would've been well known to Revolut by this time that scams involving cryptocurrency are becoming increasingly prevalent. I think that by the time Mr B made payment seven to the scam, the frequency and value of payments he was making were sufficiently out of character that Revolut ought to have provided a tailored written warning, relevant to cryptocurrency investment scams and highlighting some of their key features. I also think that by around payment 11, human intervention by Revolut would have been appropriate to further question his change in payment patterns by this time.

I've therefore gone on to consider whether I think either of these forms of intervention would have made a difference here, but I don't think they would have. I've received evidence that another of Mr B's banking providers did intervene when he made payments from that account to Revolut. In a call with Mr B, the other bank asked him the purpose of the payment and Mr B was reluctant to share this information, questioning why he was being asked these questions about his own money. He eventually told the advisor he was buying bitcoins and that he'd completed research and was aware of the risks involved. After seeing evidence of his cryptocurrency wallet, the other bank released his funds.

This call happened at around the same date that I think Revolut ought to have spoken to Mr B also. However, based on this call, I unfortunately think it's more likely than not that Mr B wouldn't have shared with Revolut that he was making payments to a purported employer for a job and would likely have received a warning therefore instead about cryptocurrency investments, which I don't think would have broken the 'spell' of the fraudster. Unfortunately, Mr B appears to have been heavily entrenched in the scam by the time the other bank called him, having already taken out loans from friends and banking providers - so I don't think a warning about anything other than job scams specifically would have impacted his decision to make these payments. However, as he withheld this information from another banking

provider at the same time I'm suggesting Revolut should have contacted him, I can't reasonably conclude that a conversation with Revolut would have ended differently.

Could Revolut have done anything else to recover Mr B's money?

I've also thought about whether Revolut could have done more to recover the funds after Mr B reported the fraud.

Payments were made by card to a cryptocurrency provider and that cryptocurrency was sent on to the fraudsters. So, Revolut would not have been able to recover the funds.

In addition, I don't consider that a chargeback would have had any prospect of success given there's no dispute that the cryptocurrency platform performed its given role in providing cryptocurrency in return for payment in sterling.

Overall while I'm sorry to disappoint Mr B – and I don't underestimate the impact this cruel scam will have had on him - I haven't determined that Revolut can be held responsible for his losses and I'm therefore not minded to ask it to reimburse him.

My provisional decision

My provisional decision is that I don't uphold Mr B's complaint against Revolut Ltd.

Mr B didn't agree with my provisional decision. He said that over the time frame of the scam there was a significant increase in spending towards the scam and no human intervention was provided by Revolut, as he considers there should have been. Mr B doesn't think it can be assumed that he wouldn't have provided honest answers if questioned, or that intervention wouldn't have been successful.

Revolut did not respond to the provisional 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.

While I've considered the additional points Mr B has raised, this hasn't changed my opinion on what I think is a fair outcome for his complaint. In my provisional decision I agreed with Mr B that I think intervention ought to have taken place in different forms at different points in the scam. However, when this doesn't happen, I don't consider the fairest approach is to presume this intervention would have successfully impacted Mr B's decision to proceed. I instead have to consider all available evidence to determine how I think Mr B would have responded to such intervention.

As explained, Mr B had a call with another firm at a very similar time to when I've suggested Revolut ought to have spoken with him, and during this other call, Mr B wasn't open about what he was doing. Based on the answers he provided to this other firm, I think the most likely outcome here in a call with Revolut would have been that Mr B would've been provided with a cryptocurrency investment warning, which for the reasons I've already covered, I don't think would've prevented this scam.

Therefore while I'm sorry to disappoint Mr B, my opinion remains the same here that while Revolut ought to have done more during the scam, it can't be held responsible for his losses.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold Mr B's complaint about Revolut Ltd.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 12 March 2025.

Kirsty Upton
Ombudsman