

## **The complaint**

Mrs H complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC ('Barclays') won't reimburse the funds she lost when she fell victim to investment scams.

## **What happened**

Mrs H's professional representative wrote to Barclays in May 2024 and said that between May 2020 and December 2022 Mrs H used her Barclays account to send nearly £18,000 to scammers. Her representative included a table that showed funds were sent to various cryptocurrency exchanges, to two individuals Mrs H say provided her with cryptocurrency, and to a company. Some funds were said to be for an investment with a company I'll call V, which Mrs H said was widely recognised to operate a scam. Other funds went to unregulated platforms.

Mrs H's representative said that Barclays failed to protect Mrs H when the payments were made and should reimburse her in full.

Barclays noted that it had asked Mrs H's representative detailed questions to understand the nature of the scam(s) but had not received a response. It said it couldn't assess her claim without the information requested.

### *Our investigation so far*

The investigator who considered this complaint didn't recommend that it be upheld. He said there was insufficient evidence to show that Mrs H lost money to a scam. All he could be satisfied of was that Mrs H had bought cryptocurrency from various parties, which was legitimately bought.

Mrs H didn't agree with the investigator's findings. I have summarised her main points below.

- She fell victim to four different scams. Each one of them are recognised to be scams and her letter of complaint sets out where her payments were sent.
- The investigator was penalising her for being a 'crypto enthusiast' when this was not the case.
- Barclays should have intervened when out of character payments were made.

Mrs H responded to questions asked by the investigator and provided a small amount of evidence. She said she was introduced to investing in cryptocurrency in 2018, she no longer has any communication with the scammers, the funds were for various cryptocurrency investments, and she received funds from others who didn't have cryptocurrency accounts. Mrs H also provided cryptocurrency platform statements, and identified on a different document the payments that came from others.

## **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 agree with the investigator that Mrs H hasn't provided sufficient evidence to persuade me that she lost funds after falling victim to a scam, or multiple scams, or to identify what the

payments she made related to. She has provided almost no explanation of how she became involved in the investments or what each payment she claims relates to a scam was for. Marking on a list of transactions which alleged scam the payment relates to doesn't go far enough.

Many of the transactions Mrs H has asked Barclays to reimburse went to cryptocurrency exchanges. Mrs H has provided evidence that funds left these cryptocurrency wallets but nothing to show the cryptocurrency was sent to a scammer or on the instructions of a scammer. Not all cryptocurrency payments relate to a scam. And Mrs H hasn't provided anything in respect of the payments she made to an individual and a business, so these transactions could have been for anything.

The very limited evidence Mrs H has provided does not show that Mrs H's funds were sent on the instructions of a scammer. For example, I have seen a screenshot of a platform login screen and an email about successfully completing an account registration. But the company names mentioned in each don't match the scams Mrs H says she has fallen victim to.

Mrs H's representative has referred to various schemes that they say are known to be scams. Even if this was the case, there is nothing to link Mrs H's transactions with these potential scams.

Overall, I can't fairly say Mrs H lost funds because she fell victim to a scam or several scams. So I can't fairly require Barclays to reimburse her loss.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons stated, I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs H to accept or reject my decision before 15 July 2025.

Jay Hadfield  
**Ombudsman**