

The complaint

Miss J complains that Revolut Ltd won't refund the full amount of money she lost to a scam.

What happened

Miss J made several payments to what he thought was a task-based job. Miss J later realised she had been scammed, so she logged a complaint with Revolut.

Revolut looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. So, Miss J brought her complaint to our service.

Our investigator looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. Our investigator found Revolut gave Miss J payment warnings, but Miss J didn't provide accurate information when asked about the payment purposes. So, our investigator didn't find Revolut could have prevented the scam.

Miss J didn't agree with the investigator's view. So, the complaint has been passed to me to decide.

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 significant part 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.

I've thought carefully about whether Revolut treated Miss J fairly and reasonably in its dealings with her, both when she made the payments and when she reported the scam, or whether it should have done more than it did. Having done so, I've decided to not uphold Miss J's complaint. I know this will come as a disappointment to Miss J and so I want to explain why I've reached the decision I have.

I've kept in mind that Miss J made the payments herself, and the starting position is that Revolut should follow its customer's instructions. So, under the Payment Services Regulations 2017 (PSR 2017) she is presumed liable for the loss in the first instance. I appreciate that Miss J did not intend for her money to ultimately go to fraudsters – but she did authorise these payments to take place. However, there are some situations when a business should have had a closer look at the wider circumstances surrounding a transaction before allowing it to be made.

Considering the relevant law and regulations; regulators' rules, guidance, and standards; codes of practice; and, where appropriate, what I consider to be good industry practice at the time – Revolut should fairly and reasonably:

- Have been monitoring accounts and any payments made or received to counter various risks, including anti-money laundering, countering the financing of terrorism, and preventing fraud and scams.
- Have had systems in place to look out for unusual transactions or other signs that might indicate that its customers were at risk of fraud (among other things). This is particularly so given the increase in sophisticated fraud and scams in recent years, which payment service providers are generally more familiar with than the average customer.
- In some circumstances, irrespective of the payment channel used, have taken additional steps, or made additional checks, before processing a payment, or in some cases decline to make a payment altogether, to help protect customers from the possibility of financial harm from fraud.
- Have acted to avoid causing foreseeable harm to customers, for example by maintaining adequate systems to detect and prevent scams and by ensuring all aspects of its products, including the contractual terms, enabled it to do so.

I have reviewed the payments Miss J made to the scam. Having considered when they were made, their value and who they were made to, I'm persuaded Revolut ought to have had concerns about the payment she made of £3,273 on 22 October 2024. This payment was higher than any of the payments Miss J had made before and was going to an identifiable cryptocurrency exchange. So, I'm satisfied Revolut ought to have identified that Miss J might be at risk of financial harm.

Given the value and the identifiable risk at the time, I'm satisfied that a proportionate intervention would have been to ask Miss J a series of questions to get a better understanding of the payment purpose, to then give a tailored and relevant warning. Here though, I'm not convinced it would have prevented the scam. I'll explain why.

Miss J got warnings like the one I've described above, on earlier payments. When asked, Miss J didn't give accurate responses to the payment purpose and in turn didn't get warnings relevant to the scam she was falling victim to. Revolut did give the option of selecting "paying to earn money" but Miss J didn't select this.

As Miss J didn't provide accurate responses to Revolut's in-app questions, she denied it the opportunity to attempt to uncover the scam and prevent her losses.

Miss J also spoke to a third-party bank advisor when she sent money to the scam from her other account. Here Miss J again wasn't accurate with her answers to its questions or forthcoming with why she was sending the money.

As Miss J hasn't supplied any evidence of the scam, or the conversations she had with the scammer, I'm unable to see why she wasn't giving accurate answers to the questions being asked by either business. I find it most likely she was under the spell of the scammer, and that made it difficult for either business to uncover the scam.

I can see that Revolut attempted to recover the money, but as the money was sent to other accounts in Miss J's name then moved on, no recovery would have been possible. If the money remained in these accounts, Miss J would have been able to move it back himself.

Miss J feels that Revolut should refund the money she lost due to the scam. I understand that this will have been frustrating for her. But I've thought carefully about everything that has happened, and with all the circumstances of this complaint in mind I don't think Revolut needs to pay Miss J any compensation. I realise this means Miss J is out of pocket and I'm sorry she's lost this money. However, for the reasons I've explained, I don't think I can reasonably uphold this 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 Miss J to accept or reject my decision before 18 October 2025.

Tom Wagstaff
Ombudsman