

The complaint

Mrs M complains Revolut Ltd won't refund the full amount of money she 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.

Mrs M complains that she sent several payments to what she thought was another account in her name after she received a call from what she thought was the police advising her that her bank account had been compromised. Shortly after making the payments, she realised she'd been scammed. So, she logged a complaint with Revolut.

Revolut investigated the complaint but didn't uphold it. So, Mrs M brought her complaint to our service.

Our investigator looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. Our investigator found Revolut warned Mrs M she was most likely being scammed, but she decided to make the payments anyway.

Mrs M and her 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 payments Mrs M sent, individually I don't think any of them are of a value that I think ought to have triggered Revolut's automatic payment checking systems. Having said that, as a combined value, how closely together they were all sent, and that they were identifiably being converted into cryptocurrency, I do think enough of a pattern formed here to suggest Mrs M might be at a heightened risk of financial harm due to fraud or a scam. So, I'm persuaded Revolut 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 Mrs M gave to its questions – and I can see that it did this when Mrs M sent the cryptocurrency.

When Mrs M was presented with the questions, had she chosen "transfer to another account in her name", which I assume she was told she was doing given her account was at risk, she would have got a warning relevant to an impersonation/safe account scam, which is what she was falling victim to.

Mrs M didn't choose that option though. Instead, she chose "something else." Although Mrs M didn't choose the description most relevant to her situation, she did still get several warnings aimed at an impersonation/safe account scam. One of those warnings mentioned unexpected calls and how fraudsters can make calls look legitimate, which was exactly what they had done in the circumstances of Mrs M's scam. So, although I'm considering the payments Mrs M made to convert her money to cryptocurrency before she sent it (as this is what we have jurisdiction to investigate) even if the warnings had been presented in the same way earlier, I think they would've had the same impact. Therefore, I do not think Revolut could have prevented her losses.

In response to our investigators view, Mrs M said she was new into the country and wasn't aware of these types of scams. She went on to say that Revolut should have done more to warn her. I've considered this point carefully, but it doesn't change the outcome I've reached. Revolut gave Mrs M warnings relevant to the scam she was falling victim to, and this was considering Mrs M not being entirely accurate with the answers to its questions. So, I'm satisfied a proportionate warning was given, but Mrs M chose to continue to make the payments.

Recovery

The sending of cryptocurrency isn't a regulated activity, so our service doesn't have jurisdiction to consider whether Revolut could recover these funds. Having said that, it's worth noting that our service doesn't believe that cryptocurrency transfers are reversable or can be recovered in any event.

Because of the above, I'm not persuaded Revolut could have successfully recovered Mrs M's funds.

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 Mrs M to accept or reject my decision before 20 June 2025.

Tom Wagstaff
Ombudsman