

The complaint

Mr R complains that Monzo Bank Ltd won't refund the full amount of money he 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.

Mr R complains that he sent several payments from his account with Monzo Bank Ltd to what he believed was a legitimate investment - then a recovery of his lost investment. When Mr R realised he had been scammed, he logged a complaint with Monzo.

Monzo looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. So, Mr R brought his complaint to our service.

Our investigator looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. Our investigator found that the warning that Monzo gave Mr R on his first payment to the scam was proportionate to the value and risk identified. He didn't find any of the other payments reached values that ought to have concerned Monzo.

As no formal agreement could be reached, 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.

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. Monzo is expected to process authorised payment instructions without undue delay. As a bank, it also has 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 a bank 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 size of the individual payments I agree with the investigator that by payment 1 I would have expected an intervention by Monzo. The payment was of a value that I think ought to have concerned Monzo that Mr R could be at risk of financial harm.

Given the value and identifiable risk at the point the payment was made, I'm satisfied much like the investigator that a proportionate intervention would have been a general scam warning, which Monzo did give Mr R.

Given the value and when Mr R sent this payment, although firms were on notice that cryptocurrency scams were increasing, I wouldn't have expected Monzo to go further than a general scam warning in the circumstances of this complaint.

I'm unsure why Mr R moved passed this warning, as we haven't been supplied with any evidence from the scam, including any contact with the scammer. Mr R has said he carried out his own research though, and this most likely reassured him that what he was investing in was legitimate.

It's worth noting that even if I were to consider upholding this complaint (which for the avoidance of any doubt I'm not), Mr R hasn't sent anything to support his claim that he was scammed. Our service hasn't received anything to show he was contacted, asked to send money, or that it created a loss. Mr R said he was scammed twice, by two different people, so I'd expect some information or evidence to be available.

As Mr R sent the money to a wallet in his own name, before moving the money on to the scammer, there was no scheme or recovery open to Monzo.

Mr R feels that Monzo should refund the money he lost due to the scam. I understand that this will have been frustrating for him. But I've thought carefully about everything that has happened, and with all the circumstances of this complaint in mind I don't think Monzo needs to pay Mr R any compensation. I realise this means Mr R is out of pocket and I'm sorry he'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 Mr R to accept or reject my decision before 12 November 2025.

Tom Wagstaff
Ombudsman