

The complaint

Mr O complains that Revolut Ltd hasn't refunded him the money he lost when he fell victim to a scam.

What happened

I issued my provisional decision, not upholding Mr O's complaint, on 4 March 2025. I've set out my provisional decision below.

In late 2023 Mr O embarked on a job opportunity which unfortunately turned out to be a scam.

After having discovered he'd been scammed he contacted Revolut to report what had happened.

Revolut looked into what had happened but made the decision not to reimburse Mr O. It said it provided specific scam warnings and it wasn't able to recover the lost funds.

Mr O, unhappy with Revolut's response, referred his complaint to us.

One of our investigators looked into Mr O's complaint and decided to uphold it in part. She felt that Revolut ought to have done more to protect Mr O from losing the money he did to the scam. She felt that had it done so, Mr O would've made a different decision and ultimately not lost the money he did to the scam. However, she also thought that Mr O should bear some responsibility for the loss he incurred too.

Mr O accepted the investigator's view but Revolut didn't. It said it provided multiple interventions and Mr O gave inaccurate answers to the questions it asked. It also said Mr O was clearly frustrated with the interventions it provided.

Because Revolut didn't agree with the investigator's view it's been passed to me to decide.

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.

Having taken into account longstanding regulatory expectations and requirements, and what I consider to be good industry practice, I agree Revolut ought to have been on the look-out for the possibility of fraud and made additional checks before processing payments in some circumstances.

I can see from the evidence that it did find some of the payments suspicious as it paused them to make further enquiries about them. I agree with the investigator that the quality of Revolut's interventions could have been better – for example, even though Revolut made some attempt to establish the purpose of the payments, it could have more clearly

challenged the payment purpose Mr O provided by asking additional questions. But I'm not persuaded that would have prevented Mr O's loss.

I say this because Mr O had been subject to social engineering and was being coached extensively by the scammer. This coaching included how he should answer questions posed by Revolut about the payments he was making. I can see from the conversation between Mr O and the fraudster that she asked him to share screenshots of any questions he was asked about the payments, or talked him through each step of the process. From what I can see, Mr O broadly followed her instructions.

It's also the case that the fraudster built a strong rapport with Mr O – there is evidence from their communication that Mr O developed a romantic interest in the fraudster. For example, Mr O had agreed to treat the person he was dealing with to a meal. Even though at times Mr O expressed doubt over the legitimacy of the 'job' and his contact with the fraudster, ultimately I'm persuaded the fraudster overcame any lack of trust and developed a strong rapport with Mr O.

Finally I can see that Mr O became frustrated with Revolut's enquiries quite quickly. Despite the doubts he expressed to the fraudster as to the legitimacy of the job opportunity he showed little sign of positively engaging with Revolut's fraud interventions. I think Mr O's frustration would've grown rather than diminished had Revolut's enquiries been better and more detailed, and as a result, I'm persuaded Mr O would have been even less inclined to engage with them.

Overall, for the reasons I've explained, I'm not persuaded that even if Revolut had done a better job of trying to protect Mr O from financial harm from fraud that he would've revealed exactly what the payments were for. I think it's more likely than not Mr O would've reverted to the fraudster on how to answer any questions and would likely have done so in such a way as to avoid alerting Revolut to what was really happening.

I've also thought about whether Revolut should've done more to try to recover the funds Mr O lost. Unfortunately there were no recovery options here. This is because it's my understanding the product paid for – in this case cryptocurrency – was provided, albeit I accept it was then lost to a fraudster.

Whilst Mr O has undoubtedly been the victim of a cruel scam, I can only uphold his complaint if I'm satisfied Revolut's failings made a material difference to what happened. For the reasons given, I'm not persuaded they did.

My provisional decision

For the reasons given above, my provisional decision is that I don't intend to uphold this complaint.

I asked both parties to respond to my decision by 18 March 2025. Mr O's representative didn't agree with my provisional decision and Revolut has not responded.

Mr O's representative has said they agreed with the investigator's opinion. In support of their view, they've said that Mr O had been honest with Revolut about someone assisting him through the payment process, and they felt that Revolut hadn't gone far enough to uncover the purpose of the payments. As a result, Mr O wasn't provided with enough information to protect himself.

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.

Having done so, and having carefully considered Mr O's representative's response to my provisional decision, I remain persuaded Mr O's complaint should not be upheld.

As I explained in my provisional decision, I accept Revolut ought to have done more than it did to protect Mr O from financial harm from fraud. But overall, I'm not persuaded it could have prevented Mr O's loss.

In reaching this conclusion I have taken into account that Mr O did provide some accurate responses to Revolut's questions; some of which did prompt Revolut to question him further about the payments he was making.

But this wasn't always the case. Mr O also gave inaccurate responses and showed clear frustration throughout Revolut's questioning. These factors, combined with the ongoing coaching from the fraudster during this time, continues to persuade me that Mr O wouldn't have positively engaged with Revolut even if it had done more to try to protect him from the scam. The weight of the evidence suggests to me that Mr O's primary objective during interactions with Revolut was to ensure the payments he was attempting to make were successful.

On balance, even if Revolut had done more, I'm not persuaded Mr O would've engaged as positively and accurately as he needed to for it to specifically warn him about the scam he fell victim to. I think it's more likely than not Mr O's answers would've been influenced by the fraudster - who he'd built a relationship with - and I remain of the opinion that this would've prevented Revolut from exposing the scam.

While I am sympathetic to Mr O's situation and the loss he incurred as a result of the scam, for the reasons set out above and in my provisional decision, I do not uphold this complaint.

My final decision

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

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr O to accept or reject my decision before 25 April 2025.

Katie Doran
Ombudsman