

The complaint

Mr H has complained Revolut Ltd did nothing to stop him being a victim of a scam.

What happened

Mr H has held an account with Revolut since April 2021.

Mr H fell victim to a scam in November 2023 after believing he was talking to someone who represented his other bank (who I'll call S). He understood there were card transactions being undertaken. He needed to provide relevant codes to the individual on the phone to ensure he could be refunded by his bank. During a long conversation, Mr H also made two transfers of £11,970 and £9,980 to his account with Revolut.

As part of this scam, Mr H was persuaded to make four further payments from his Revolut account totalling £21,950. Revolut raised questions with Mr H about these transactions within his app and Mr H confirmed he was making payments to friends and family. Mr H was being coached by the fraudster to respond to these questions.

This initial call took place within a short period of a genuine conversation Mr H had been having with S about payments he'd been making to individuals he considered friends but who S believed were scamming Mr H. So, Mr H was willing to accept that he was talking to his genuine bank.

Later that day, 15 November, Mr H realised that this may have been a scam and contacted S. S alerted Revolut on 16 November who immediately started to try and recoup Mr H's losses.

Revolut refunded £8,297.17 on 21 December 2023 that they'd been able to recoup from accounts the funds had been paid into. Mr H remained unhappy that Revolut wouldn't refund more. He brought his complaint to the ombudsman service.

Our investigator noted that there was an emotional impact of being a fraud victim so appreciated Mr H's situation. She believed Revolut should have intervened in more of the transactions but could see that Mr H was most likely being coached and would have continued to make the payments. She wasn't going to ask Revolut to have done more.

Still unhappy, Mr H has asked an ombudsman to consider his complaint.

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, I've reached the same conclusion as our investigator. I'll explain why.

Where there is a dispute about what happened, I have based my decision on the balance of probabilities. In other words, on what I consider is most likely to have happened in the light of the evidence.

I won't be writing in detail about the different aspects of what happened. I hope neither party thinks I'm being disrespectful but much of what happened isn't in dispute. There are numerous phone calls which have been made available to our service (including Mr H's calls with the scammer) and our investigator provided a detailed view on 18 February 2025.

Over an extended period in 2023, I can see Mr H was the victim of what's known as a romance scam. This was causing S some alarm and they'd taken steps to do what they could to avoid this situation continuing. This is relevant in that this meant Mr H believed the scammer advising him he needed to keep his money safe from abuse that S had spotted.

Although Mr H was being tricked, I can see from the evidence that Revolut has shared that he made and authorised the four payments to three different payees.

I'm therefore satisfied the transactions were authorised under the Payment Services Regulations 2017. But that isn't the whole story.

Taking into account the law, regulator's rules and guidance, relevant codes of practice and what I consider to have been good industry practice at the time, I consider that Revolut should:

- have been monitoring accounts and payments made or received to counter various risks, including fraud and scams, money laundering, and the financing of terrorism.
- 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 (amongst other things). This is particularly so given the increase in sophisticated fraud and scams in recent years, which financial institutions 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 declined to make a payment altogether, to help protect its customers from the possibility of financial harm.

I have therefore considered whether Revolut should have done more. Did Mr H present as someone at risk of fraud and therefore merit intervention by Revolut?

Mr H had held an account with Revolut for more than two years. He'd not originally used the account much, but within the previous four weeks, he had made a series of larger value transfers into this account, although none exceeded £1,000. He'd then made a series of five payments to an individual totalling £2,450 – trying I believe to avoid S's concerns about Mr H's payment behaviour and risk of being the victim of a romance scam.

So Revolut would have been able to note the recent and increased activity on the account.

That said the two payments of £11,970 and £9,980 would have shown as unusual. And Mr H's attempts to make transfers using this money should have alerted Revolut.

In his testimony to our service, Mr H accepts *"he received several warnings from the Revolut app"*. These covered the first attempted payment to a new payee which was for £9,980. Revolut's automated systems completely blocked this transaction as they regarded it as suspicious. Mr H confirms he told the scammer this and they provided him with other account details he needed to set up. Three further new payees were added by Mr H and within just over an hour, £21,950 was sent to those payees.

Revolut's system will provide automated checks as a new payee is set up and issue a standard warning stating *"Do you know and trust this payee?"*. I can see that Mr H stated he did. There were additional questions and Mr H confirmed he was paying a friend. For the first payment (successfully made) additional questions were prompted by this confirmation and Mr H subsequently stated he'd paid this individual previously using different bank details.

It's very clear that Mr H was in thrall to the scammer. He's confirmed *"by now I was confused and frightened but all the same I still believed that the caller on the phone was helping me to protect my money"*. Unfortunately, this means – that although I believe Revolut should have issued further warnings about subsequent payments – I don't believe Mr H would have paid any attention to these. He'd already ignored warnings from S about being the victim of a romance scam so I don't think he'd have paid any attention to what Revolut would have said.

I've paid particular attention to the last payment. An earlier attempt to pay £9,900 to the same payee was firstly declined but then a payment to the same payee for £9,950 was sent. I believe Revolut should have intervened further and potentially blocked this latter payment.

However, I would only have considered Revolut refunding half of that amount to Mr H based on his own behaviour. I'm very much not blaming Mr H for what happened but when we consider authorised transactions, the rules mean we look at the role played by the accountholder. There is no dispute here that Mr H ignored all warnings presented to him. This would have meant I'd have asked Revolut to refund £4,975. Revolut managed to refund nearly £8,300 as they recouped this amount of funds. This therefore means there is nothing further for me to ask Revolut to do.

My final decision

For the reasons given, my final decision is not to uphold Mr H's complaint against Revolut Ltd.

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

Sandra Quinn
Ombudsman