

The complaint

Mrs H complains that Revolut Ltd won't refund several payments she says she made and 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 H complains that from January 2023, she sent several payments to what she thought was a legitimate investment.

Mrs H says she spotted an advertisement on a social media platform, promoting an online investment opportunity. Mrs H says the company was endorsed by a well-known celebrity.

Mrs H completed an online enquiry form registering her interest in the investment and then received a call from someone (the scammer).

The scammer discussed the investment and from there Mrs H started to send money. When Mrs H asked to withdraw the bulk of her money and it was refused, she realised she'd been scammed. So, she logged a complaint with Revolut.

Revolut looked into the complaint but didn't think it had done anything wrong when it allowed the payments to be made. As Mrs H remained unhappy with Revolut's response, she brought her complaint to our service.

Our investigator looked into the complaint but didn't uphold it. Our investigator didn't think that Revolut could have prevented Mrs H's losses. She also didn't find Mrs H was answering the questions Revolut asked her before making the payments accurately.

As Mrs H didn't agree with the investigator's view, 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 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 value of the first two payments Mrs H made, I'm not convinced they are of a value that ought to have concerned Revolut or its automatic payment checking systems.

Payment 3 increased in value and although there was no account history for Revolut to compare it to, I'm satisfied it reached an amount that ought to have put Revolut on notice that Mrs H could've been at risk of financial harm. At this point I would have expected a proportionate intervention.

However, even if Revolut had given further warnings or spoken to Mrs H, I'm satisfied that she would more likely than not have still wanted to go ahead with the payments. I'll explain why.

Revolut did intervene on an earlier payment and asked Mrs H for the payment purpose. Mrs H concealed the real reason and said it was for "goods and services," and she was then taken into a live chat with an agent. Mrs H was then asked further questions and told the advisor it was a payment for a personal item that she would rather not discuss. Mrs H went on to say that she hadn't been asked to download any screen sharing software and hadn't been asked to ignore any warnings.

As well as the above, to fund the scam, Mrs H made payments from her account with a third-party bank into her Revolut account. The third-party bank contacted Mrs H on 20 April 2023 and spoke to her about a payment of £10,000 she attempted to make. I have listened to this call and Mrs H wasn't giving accurate responses to the questions it asked.

Mrs H confirmed that no one had asked her to make the payment, no one had told her what to say if the bank had questioned her about the transaction and she was making some home improvements including building an outside kitchen. Mrs H was also asked if she had been asked to download any screen sharing software to which she replied that she hadn't. This contradicts her testimony where she says she was asked by the scammer to download software that gave the scammer access to her screen. Mrs H then says on a further call that the payment was for something connected to her home and she was transferring money to her Revolut account for the rewards.

Mrs H and her representative have said that she sent the money to a cryptocurrency provider and this should have raised red flags with Revolut. I've considered this point carefully, but from the limited information I can find on the merchant Mrs H sent the money to, it doesn't look like its easily identifiable as a cryptocurrency provider.

The consequence of Mrs H's actions stopped Revolut from being able to uncover the scam or prevent her loss. Even if Revolut had asked further questions or spoken to her on later payments, I'm not persuaded that Mrs H would have been open and honest with her

answers to those either. I think it's most likely she would have given answers that would have alleviated Revolut's concerns.

Recovery

Much like the investigator, I haven't found Revolut could have done anything more to recover the funds. Mrs H's chargeback rights were out of time and from what we know of scams of this type, the scammer normally moves the funds on from the receiving bank within 24 hours of the payments being made, presumably to frustrate any effort of recovery.

So, I don't think I can hold Revolut responsible for Mrs H being unable to recover her funds.

Mrs H 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 Mrs H any compensation. I realise this means Mrs H is out of pocket and I'm really 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 Mrs H to accept or reject my decision before 25 June 2025.

Tom Wagstaff
Ombudsman