

## **The complaint**

Mr O complains that Revolut Ltd didn't do enough to protect him at a time he was falling victim to a scam and that it hasn't refunded him since he reported it.

## **What happened**

The background to this complaint is well-known to both parties and so I'll only summarise key events here.

In July 2023 Mr O was contacted by someone he didn't know on WhatsApp. They were offering an opportunity to earn money from home. The job was described as the optimisation of apps through the completion of tasks, using an online portal.

Mr O didn't have the time to get involved initially. But a month later he decided to give it a go.

Whilst Mr O believed the opportunity and persons involved to be genuine, he was in fact in contact with scammers.

Mr O was told he'd have to use a cryptocurrency wallet to help with the work he was to do. He'd have to credit that wallet, buy cryptocurrency, and then send it on at the scammer's instruction. The idea was that he had to clear a negative balance on the job portal in order to keep working. And that once a certain number of tasks had been completed, he'd be reimbursed along with the payment of salary and commission.

Mr O opened a new Revolut account for the purpose of completing these tasks and funding the crypto account. He topped up the balance from a current account he holds with a different bank. He then sent the money on to his crypto wallet (using his debit card details) before sending it on to the scammer.

But Mr O found that whenever he got close to completing the required number of tasks, he'd get a fresh batch, with an ever-increasing balance to clear. Mr O quickly found himself sending thousands of pounds to the scam without getting back what was promised. He sent two payments within two hours of each other, the first for £2,028.90 the second for £4,431.95.

And it was this pattern, of sending money for no return, that led to the realisation he'd been caught up in a scam.

Mr O reported what had happened to Revolut through a professional representative. Revolut replied to say that Mr O would need to raise a chargeback request, which he hadn't previously done.

Mr O wasn't happy with Revolut's response and so brought the complaint to our service. One of our investigators considered it and said there was no need for Revolut to reimburse Mr O.

He looked beyond the issue of raising a chargeback and considered whether Revolut had acted fairly and reasonably in allowing the transactions to debit Mr O's account at the time, including whether it ought to have intervened to question the payments.

Our investigator found that Revolut ought to have questioned what was happening with the second payment as it represented an elevated risk of financial harm from fraud to Mr O. There had been two high-value payments to a cryptocurrency platform in quick succession,

with the amount sent increasing significantly. He was satisfied Revolut ought to have recognised a scam risk and to have stepped in to warn Mr O of the potential dangers.

However, he wasn't persuaded such an intervention would have made a difference. He said as much because it was evident Mr O's other account provider had intervened when Mr O was sending money to his Revolut account. When it questioned Mr O as to the purpose of the payment he wasn't forthcoming with the truth. Instead of telling the bank what he was doing, Mr O said he was just moving his money between his accounts, particularly so he had access to funds he could spend when abroad.

Our investigator felt this demonstrated that he would have reacted similarly to any attempted intervention from Revolut; misdirecting it instead of being open and honest about what he was doing.

The investigator's overall finding then was that whilst Revolut ought to have acted differently, it's not providing a warning wasn't enough to say it ought now bear responsibility for Mr O's loss.

Mr O disagreed. He felt that as Revolut had made a mistake it ought to compensate him for his loss.

The case has been passed to me for review as an agreement hasn't been reached.

### **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'm not upholding it. I'll explain why.

I am sorry to hear about what's happened to Mr O. Scams like this are particularly cruel and the impact of them goes beyond the financial. But whilst I sympathise with Mr O, I can't say that Revolut ought to reimburse his loss.

In broad terms, the starting position at law is that an Electronic Money Institution (EMI) such as Revolut is expected to process payments and withdrawals that a customer authorises it to make, in accordance with the Payment Services Regulations (in this case the 2017 regulations) and the terms and conditions of the customer's account.

Here it's not in dispute that the payments were authorised, so the starting position is that Revolut isn't liable for the transactions.

There are, however, some situations where we believe that businesses, taking into account relevant rules, codes and best practice standards, shouldn't have taken their customer's authorisation instruction at 'face value' – or should have looked at the wider circumstances surrounding the transaction before making the payment.

Revolut also has a duty to exercise reasonable skill and care, pay due regard to the interest of its customers and to follow good industry practice to keep customer's accounts safe. This includes identifying vulnerable consumers who may be particularly susceptible to scams and looking out for payments which might indicate the consumer is at risk of financial harm.

Taking these things into account, I need to decide whether Revolut acted fairly and reasonably in its dealings with Mr O.

I'd like to assure Mr O and Revolut that I've reviewed the complaint carefully in light of all of this. I'm really sorry to disappoint Mr O, but in this case I'm not able to recommend that Revolut should be required to provide him with a refund.

I recognise that he made the payments as a result of fraud and I'm really sorry he lost this money. But having looked into what happened, I don't think Revolut should reasonably have been expected to prevent this.

Having considered what Revolut knew about the payments at the time they received the payment instruction, I'm persuaded it ought to have been concerned about the second payment and for broadly the same reasons as our investigator, including:

- It was the second payment identifiably being made to a cryptocurrency platform;
- Revolut ought fairly and reasonably to have been aware of the increased risk of scams where payments to such platforms are involved;
- The payments were made in quick succession, within two hours of each other;
- The value of the payments started fairly high and quickly escalated.

I don't find Revolut needed to step in for the first payment given the limited transaction history and that it wasn't (as a standalone payment) of sufficiently concerning value.

Based on the circumstances of the transactions (as I've explained above), I'm persuaded that Revolut ought to have identified that Mr O was at risk of financial harm from fraud when he went to make the second payment, and it should have done more to establish the circumstances surrounding the payment.

However, even if Revolut had done this, I'm satisfied that Mr O would have still wanted to go ahead with the payment. I say this because it's evident he did mislead his other bank as to the purpose of the payment. And whilst Revolut would have had more information about the ultimate destination of the funds (that being they were sent to a crypto wallet, rather than one of Mr O's own current accounts) the evidence shows that Mr O was taking active steps to avoid questioning.

We asked Mr O about why he chose to mislead his other bank. Especially as there is very limited evidence of him being coached to do so by the scammers. In response he said, '*The reason [he] did not mention the job opportunity was because [he] felt that explaining the job opportunity might complicate the process and potentially delay the transfer. [He] believed that providing a simpler and more relatable reason would expedite the transaction without raising further questions.*'

To me, this demonstrates that he was actively trying to disguise what he was doing and to hide the details of the job opportunity. It's then difficult for me to see why he would have acted differently had Revolut started to ask questions about what was happening. And it follows that it's more likely than not he would have avoided telling Revolut about the job opportunity. That would then mean that it's unlikely Revolut would have been able to identify the specific scam risk and deliver a relevant warning.

I know Mr O had already been engaged in some cryptocurrency trading (not involving the Revolut account) and so it seems reasonable to conclude he would have offered that as an explanation. In which case he'd only have received an unrelated warning about cryptocurrency investment scams.

I would otherwise have to conclude that Mr O would have acted very differently with Revolut than he did with his other bank. But I don't believe the evidence fairly and reasonably supports that is what would more likely than not to have happened.

I do also have in mind that Mr O has sadly been the victim of a scam before. Not long before these events Mr O fell victim to a crypto investment scam. Whilst the nature of that scam was different, there are some parallels, including being contacted out of the blue by unknown parties, and with little ability to identify or confirm who those parties are. It's also the case that Mr O received warnings during that scam. So he was aware that these interventions from account providers are designed to try and stop people falling victim to a scam. But he

still decided to mislead the bank, rather than go through the fair and reasonable steps in place, which were there to try and protect him. To me, this supports that he was going to do what was necessary to get the payments through for the job scam, which would have meant giving misleading answers.

#### Recovery of funds

I've also looked at whether Revolut took the steps it should have once it was aware that the payments were the result of fraud.

Unfortunately, there's little Revolut could have done here. There was no way for it to pull back the funds. Especially as Mr O had already sent them on from his crypto wallet.

Revolut did mention a chargeback against the cryptocurrency platform, although this was never pursued. But, even if it had been, the chargeback would never have been successful. That's because the payments had been properly authorised by Mr O and the platform had provided the goods and services it was contracted to.

#### **My final decision**

I don't uphold this 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 1 August 2025.

Ben Murray  
**Ombudsman**