

The complaint

Mrs G complains that Revolut Ltd didn't do enough to prevent her losing money to a scam.

Mrs G has used a representative to bring her complaint. But, for ease of reading, I'll mostly just refer to Mrs G where I also mean the representative.

What happened

The detailed background to this complaint is well known to both parties. So, I'll only provide an overview of some of the key events here. In late 2023 and into 2024 Mrs G says she was the victim of a scam. She says she was contacted by representatives of companies who said they had found a substantial amount of money belonging to her from a previous investment. Mrs G describes being told to make payments for a variety of reasons which included unlocking and activating her account, taxes and "firewall for the blockchains to keep funds safe." She also says that she downloaded screen sharing software and was 'helped' to set up cryptocurrency wallets by the scammers.

Mrs G says she realised it was a scam when she still didn't receive funds, despite having been given a letter saying they would be released after a payment. She made payments from several firms that she held accounts with towards the same overall scam. In 2023 and 2024, Mrs G made several transactions on her Revolut account as a result of the scam. Not all of these were in GBP and her overall loss (using a rough estimation of exchange rates) amounts to around £48,000.

In July 2024 Mrs G told Revolut her payments had been made as a result of a scam and complained that they hadn't done enough to protect her. She also says she was vulnerable at the time and explained why. Revolut didn't ultimately offer any redress and the matter was referred to our service. One of our Investigators didn't recommend that the complaint should be upheld. In summary she wasn't persuaded that Revolut were responsible for errors which caused the loss. Mrs G disagrees and has asked for an Ombudsman to review her 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 agree with our Investigators outcome and for similar reasons. I know this will be disappointing for Mrs G, so I'll explain why.

Firstly, I don't dispute that Mrs G has fallen victim to a cruel scam. But just because she has been a victim of crime, this doesn't entitle her to an automatic refund from Revolut. So despite my natural sympathy for her, my role requires that I remain impartial. And I can only direct Revolut to make a payment if I think they are responsible for errors which caused the loss (or a part of it), or it is otherwise fair and reasonable that they do so.

Revolut's initial obligation is to follow the payment instructions provided by their customers like Mrs G. But, in addition to this, they should also be alert to the possibility of fraud, scams and the misappropriation of funds. They should also do what they can to protect their customers from these risks. I've kept that in mind when reviewing Mrs G's complaint.

Revolut intervened (to varying degrees) in many of the payments she made towards the scam. Examples of this include:

- Blocking card payments so warnings could be provided.
- Asking Mrs G if she was being guided by anyone.
- Asking the purpose of her payments.
- Highlighting the importance of being truthful and that a scammer may ask her to hide the real reasons for her payments.
- Asking if Mrs G had installed software to allow others to view her screen.
- Asking whether she had been told to ignore warnings.
- 'Forcing' Mrs G into online chats with their agents.

Mrs G generally answered in ways that wouldn't have caused Revolut to have additional concern. She said she wasn't being guided and hadn't downloaded software. She also said that her payments were either for 'something else' or as part of an 'investment'. When probed further on this during online chats, she said she was just buying cryptocurrency without having been guided and without the intention to send it on from the exchanges she was using. She also shared screenshots of at least one of her cryptocurrency exchange accounts to support this being the case.

I'm also aware of Mrs G's linked complaints about banks 'M' and 'H'. M intervened in some of Mrs G's payments and part of that involved them telling her (in February 2024) about how recovery scams worked, including that victims are often asked to pay up front before receiving any money back. I think Mrs G likely understood this to an extent as at the time she messaged a scammer to say "*After a thorough interrogation and review [M] authorised the transaction*". This doesn't support that M's intervention wasn't thorough or detailed. Mrs G also similarly didn't share the full story about her payments with either M or H.

Taking all of this together, I agree it was appropriate for Revolut to have intervened in some of Mrs G's payments. But irrespective of which payments this was (or how many times), I'm not persuaded that a reasonable level of intervention that fairly could've been expected would've uncovered the scam or have prevented further payments. I think the evidence is compelling that Mrs G is highly unlikely to have shared the true reasons for her payments, allowing more specific warnings to have been given. And even where the workings of a recovery scam were described by M, this wasn't impactful in stopping the scam. So even if Revolut should've highlighted how investment / recovery scams work in more detail, I've no reason to think it would've stopped Mrs G from continuing with her payments.

I've taken account of Mrs G's further comments in response to our Investigator. These include that Revolut should've asked more open, probing questions. And she doesn't consider that Revolut ever gave an effective 'crypto-scam / recovery scam' warning at any point. She also highlighted that at the relevant time, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) had published a warning about one of the firms Mrs G believed she'd been dealing with. But none of these factors change my mind as to the outcome of the complaint. I think the weight of the available evidence supports that Mrs G wouldn't be receptive to warnings and that she didn't respond sharing the full truth about her reasons for making the payments she did. I also don't think (without Mrs G sharing) that Revolut reasonably could've known Mrs G was dealing with the business the FCA had warned was offering services to UK customers without regulation.

There is also evidence in the chat history between Mrs G and the scammers which includes her following their instructions to open new accounts to continue making payments when 'friction' was introduced to payments she was trying to make. So even if Revolut had done more, it's similarly likely Mrs G would've continued her payments from other accounts she held. The scam ultimately came to light when the scammers didn't follow through on a written guarantee they'd made to make a payment, not as a result of a warning or advice from a bank or other trusted source.

Mrs G's chat history also indicates that she was fully aware of the possibility of a scam. On 3 March 2024 she said to the scammers *"So far it's just been me pumping loads of money and seeing nothing in return, apart from a slap in the face. I feel like a fool for listening to you, I am angry at myself for falling for it."* There is a further message later the same month in which Mrs G said to the scammer: *"If you were an outsider looking into this situation, a company calls a person randomly to say that they can help them release funds that were made by money given to scammers. The company ask for money over and over again promising that this payment will be the last, but keep giving reasons why the process failed and more money required. Also when the client is asking for official documents, proof and evidence of the funds and account wallet details. The company refuses to provide... I'm sure you too would think it is a scam."* These messages don't support that Mrs G hadn't considered the possibility of a scam, and after that time, she continued to make payments. There are also other messages which suggest that Mrs G had also been warned by her family that they thought it was a scam and had refused to lend her money on that basis. So overall, I still don't think Revolut can fairly be said to be responsible for Mrs G's loss.

I've also thought about whether Revolut could've done more to assist with any recovery. But the evidence supports that the payments all went to cryptocurrency. And so I don't think any chargeback or recall request would've had any reasonable chance of succeeding. Mrs G's own testimony is that the cryptocurrency was no longer in her wallet accounts at that time. So I don't think anything Revolut did or didn't do regarding recovery would've made a difference.

I appreciate that Mrs G has also said she was vulnerable at the time of the scam. And I'm sorry to hear of the difficult circumstances she's described. But as I can't see this is something Revolut were made aware of (or that they should've ascertained themselves), I don't think I could fairly say they should've done anything differently for that reason.

As I said at the start, I'm sorry to hear Mrs G lost the money she did to a cruel scam. But as I don't think this is something Revolut are responsible for, there isn't a reasonable basis upon which I can require them to do more to resolve this complaint.

My final decision

For the reasons outlined above, 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 G to accept or reject my decision before 10 October 2025.

Richard Annandale
Ombudsman