

The complaint

Mrs W complains that Monzo Bank Ltd (Monzo) is refusing to refund her the amount she lost as the result of a scam.

What happened

The background of this complaint is well known to all parties, so I won't repeat what happened in detail.

In summary, Mrs W received emails from what appeared to be Monzo stating fraudulent payments had been made on her account. Mrs W was required to authorise the payments and was told they would be refunded later. Believing the emails to be genuine Mrs W authorised the payments.

It later came to light that the emails were not sent by Monzo and Mrs W had fallen victim to a scam. Mrs W authorised the following payments in relation to the scam from her Monzo account.

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
1	17 June 2024	eBay	Debit Card	£272.22
2	17 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£272.22
3	17 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£90.74
4	17 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£90.74
5	18 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£181.98
6	18 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£272.96
7	18 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£90.99
8	18 June 2024	EWAVE STRASBOURG	Debit Card	£272.96
9	18 June 2024	Grotobook London GBR	Debit Card	£181.98
10	19 June 2024	Helpersm* AP Edinburgh	Debit Card	£455.10
11	19 June 2024	Pg Mrchnds NAI KEN	Debit Card	£925.83
12	19 June 2024	EDUNTAGE London	Debit Card	£465.17
13	19 June 2024	Canapay.io Zadar HRV	Debit Card	£889.04
14	19 June 2024	eBay	Debit Card	£500.61

Our Investigator considered Mrs W's complaint and didn't think it should be upheld. Mrs W disagreed, so this 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.

It has not been disputed that Mrs W has fallen victim to a cruel scam. The evidence provided by both Mrs W and Monzo sets out what happened. What is in dispute is whether Monzo should refund the money Mrs W lost due to the scam.

Recovering the payments Mrs W made

Mrs W authorised the payments made into the scam via her debit card. When payments are made by card the only recovery option Monzo has is to request a chargeback.

When the card payments were made Mrs W authorised them using 3DS secure. This process required Mrs W to confirm she was the person making the payment. When a payment is verified by 3DS secure there are no chargeback rights available in relation to fraud.

If a chargeback had been raised by Monzo for the reason “goods/services not received” this would also have had limited prospects of success as the retailers would most likely have been able to show they provided goods/services in return for the payments, albeit they were not received by Mrs W.

So, I don't think Monzo had any reasonable options available to it to seek recovery of the payments Mrs W has disputed.

Should Monzo have reasonably prevented the payments being made?

It has been accepted that Mrs W authorised the payments that were made from her account with Monzo, albeit on the scammer's instruction. So, the starting point here is that Mrs W is responsible.

However, banks and other Payment Services Providers (PSPs) do have a duty to protect against the risk of financial loss due to fraud and/or to undertake due diligence on large transactions to guard against money laundering.

The question here is whether Monzo should have been aware of the scam and intervened when the payments were being made. And if it had intervened, would it have been able to prevent the scam taking place.

The payments made in relation to the scam were for relatively low values over several days. The payments had also been authorised by Mrs W using 3DS secure so it would have been clear that it was Mrs W authorising the payments to be made using her card.

With the above in mind, I don't think it was unreasonable that the disputed payments didn't trigger Monzo's fraud prevention systems prompting it to intervene. As I don't think it was unreasonable that Monzo didn't intervene, I don't think Monzo missed an opportunity to prevent the scam, and it is not responsible for Mrs W's loss.

Mrs W says she tried to contact Monzo before making the payments but was directed to the online chat facility and was unable to speak to Monzo so continued with what appeared to her to be a genuine request from her trusted bank.

While I appreciate what Mrs W has told us around her difficulties communicating with Monzo before confirming the payments it would not be reasonable for me to say that Monzo is responsible for Mrs W authorising the payments because of this, and for the reasons outlined above this does not change my decision.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs W to accept or reject my decision before 13 October 2025.

Terry Woodham
Ombudsman