

## The complaint

Mr H complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC (Barclays) is refusing to refund him the amount he lost as the result of a scam.

Mr H is being represented by a third party. To keep things simple, I will refer to Mr H throughout my decision.

## What happened

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

In summary, Mr H found an advertisement via social media for an investment company I will call "X" that specialised in cryptocurrency investment, after an initial inquiry was made Mr H was contacted By X who explained the investment process.

Mr H agreed to invest with X. As part of the investment process Mr H was required to download screen sharing software and to open an account on X's platform, as well as with other account providers.

Having paid into the investment Mr H attempted to make a withdrawal. But was told he would have to make further payments first. Mr H made the requested payments but didn't receive his requested funds. At this stage Mr H realised he had fallen victim to a scam.

Mr H had disputed the following payments made from his account with Barclays in relation to the scam.

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
1	4 March 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£50.00
2	5 March 2024	Mr H	Transfer (Cancelled)	£5,000.00
3	6 March 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£5,000.00
4	9 April 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£5,000.00
5	9 April 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£5,000.00
6	2 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£100.00
7	3 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£6,000.00
8	3 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£9,000.00
9	8 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£15,950.00
10	14 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£25,000.00
11	20 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£25,000.00
12	24 May 2024	Mr H	Transfer	£21,000.00

Our Investigator considered Mr H's complaint and didn't think it should be upheld. Mr H 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 Mr H has fallen victim to a cruel scam. The evidence provided by both Mr H and Barclays sets out what happened. What is in dispute is whether Barclays should refund the money Mr H lost due to the scam.

#### *Recovering the payments Mr H made*

Mr H made the disputed payments by transfer. When payments are made by transfer Barclays has limited options available to it to seek recovery.

As the payments Mr H has disputed went to another account in his own name with another account provider he remained in control of those funds after the payments were made, and it took further steps for those funds to end up in the hands of the scammer. If any funds remained in the payee account, they would remain within Mr H's control and not require recovery.

#### *Should Barclays have reasonably prevented the payments Mr H made?*

It has been accepted that Mr H authorised the payments that were made from his account with Barclays, albeit on X's instruction. So, the starting point here is that Mr H 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 Barclays should have been aware of the scam and intervened when Mr H made the payments. And if it had intervened, would it have been able to prevent the scam taking place.

When Mr H made the disputed payments various calls between himself and Barclays took place. I have listened to recordings of the calls.

When Mr H made payment 7 he spoke to Barclays. Mr H confirmed it was him that had made the payment to his other account as the interest rates offered by that account provider were better than those offered by Barclays. Mr H explained he was approaching retirement and was moving funds to that account which would later be used to pay off his mortgage.

When Mr H made payment 12 a further call took place between Mr H and Barclays. Mr H confirmed he had sold his car and was making the payment to a savings account in his name elsewhere because the interest rate was better, again because he was planning to pay off his mortgage. Mr H said he had never spoken to anyone, no one had tried to persuade him to do anything, and no one had told him to say something different to the bank.

The payments Mr H made throughout the scam, although being made to another account in his name, were of significant values that I think should have caused Barclays to have concerns. So, I think it could be argued that Barclays should have intervened when other payments were made and it could have asked further questions.

But from the evidence I've seen it's clear Mr H was willing to give false information and create a story for the purpose of the payments to have the payments processed. Mr H was very convincing in the calls with Barclays when he gave dishonest information.

Providing dishonest answers to Barclays would and did make it extremely difficult for

Barclays to uncover the scam. Although Mr H says a better intervention would have uncovered the scam, I don't have enough to say that Mr H would have provided any more honest answers had Barclays intervened further than it did.

So, I don't think Barclays missed an opportunity to prevent the scam and it is not responsible for Mr H's loss.

### **My final decision**

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr H to accept or reject my decision before 3 November 2025.

Terry Woodham  
**Ombudsman**