

The complaint

Mr B complains that Revolut Ltd won't refund money he lost when he fell victim to a job scam.

What happened

The detailed background to this complaint is well known to both parties and has also been set out previously by the investigator. So, I'll provide an overview and focus on giving my reasons for my decision.

The complaint concerns several transactions totalling around £28,000 which Mr B made in November 2023 in connection with a job opportunity – completing tasks to boost product ratings – with a company "O" he was introduced to by a 'recruiter' who reached out to him through a popular instant messaging service. It was explained to Mr B that his job would involve completing the assigned tasks to earn wages and commission.

Some tasks earned bonus commission but left a negative balance which needed to be cleared before the task could be completed. To make that deposit, Mr B made payments as instructed by his 'account manager' at O from his Revolut account. At the time, he thought he was depositing funds to his work account, given the balance increased accordingly. Mr B realised he'd been scammed when he was unable to make withdrawals from his account with O and kept being asked to make further payments.

Revolut didn't refund Mr B's losses, and he made a complaint which was subsequently referred to our service. Our investigator didn't think Revolut acted unfairly in processing the transactions, given it had intervened on multiple occasions but Mr B's responses to its enquiries didn't raise additional concerns.

Mr B disagreed and asked for his complaint to be reviewed by an ombudsman.

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.

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.

But, taking into account relevant law, regulators rules and guidance, relevant codes of practice and what I consider to have been good industry practice at the time, I consider it fair and reasonable in November 2023 that Revolut should:

- have been monitoring accounts and any payments made or received to counter various risks, including preventing fraud and scams;

- have had systems in place to look out for unusual transactions or other signs that might indicate that its customers were at risk of fraud (among other things). This is particularly so given the increase in sophisticated fraud and scams in recent years, which firms are generally more familiar with than the average customer;
- have acted to avoid causing foreseeable harm to customers, for example by maintaining adequate systems to detect and prevent scams and by ensuring all aspects of its products, including the contractual terms, enabled it to do so; and
- in some circumstances, irrespective of the payment channel used, have taken additional steps, or made additional checks, or provided additional warnings, before processing a payment – (as in practice Revolut sometimes does including for card payments).

It isn't in dispute that Mr B has fallen victim to a cruel scam here, nor that he authorised the payments he made under the instructions of the scammer.

So, I've gone onto consider, taking into account what Revolut knew about the payments, at what point, if any, it ought to have identified that Mr B might be at a heightened risk of fraud that merited its intervention.

Revolut took additional steps when the first disputed payment (£3,375.55 plus fees) was authorised. After informing Mr B that the transaction had been flagged as a potential scam payment, it asked him to confirm the reason for the payment. Mr B was required to select from one of the payment purposes listed on the screen and the information provided shows that "as part of an investment" was submitted on this occasion. Based on the option selected, Revolut provided a scam warning specific to the scam risk identified.

I've reviewed the content of the warning, which was presented over a series of screens and couldn't be skipped. The warning covered key features of investment scams including cryptocurrency scams, such as fake investment opportunities advertised over social media and request for remote access, as well as being pressured to rush into making the payment. Given Mr B was falling victim to a job scam, the warning is unlikely to have resonated with him. However, Revolut couldn't reasonably have known that an inaccurate payment purpose selection had been made, given there were no other concerning factors about the payment.

The investigator asked Mr B why he selected the payment purpose option that he did, but he couldn't recall. In the circumstances, while it was prevented from providing a warning more suited to the actual scam Mr B had fallen victim to, I consider the steps Revolut took at this time were proportionate to the scam risk identified.

The next payment (£3,180.00 plus fees) also flagged as suspicious on Revolut's systems. On that occasion, after asking Mr B to confirm the payment purpose (he selected "as part of an investment" again) Revolut directed him to a questionnaire to make further enquiries. I've reviewed the questions asked and the responses provided. Mr B informed Revolut that: he was investing in cryptocurrency; he'd not been asked to install any software; he discovered the opportunity through friends or family; he'd invested in cryptocurrency before; he'd researched the company involved and checked that it was on the regulator's register, and the account he was transferring money to was an existing account which was in his control.

Following this, Revolut directed Mr B to its in-app chat so that an agent could discuss the payment further. Mr B was advised again that there was strong chance that the investment was a scam. But he reassured Revolut that he was completing the transaction and was *very sure* that it was safe.

The answers Mr B provided in the questionnaire weren't a true reflection of the situation. He wasn't making an investment. Mr B also confirmed to our service that there was no cryptocurrency involved during the scam; the payments went to individuals based overseas. As such, I don't think Revolut could reasonably have identified that Mr B's responses were inaccurate. As such, I don't think it acted unfairly in processing the payment. Aside from these two interventions, Revolut took additional steps and asked for the payment purpose on three further occasions. But each time, given Mr B's response, it was prevented from identifying the actual scam risk involved. Additionally, as the investigator noted in their assessment, the bank Mr B transferred funds into Revolut from to fund the disputed payments has provided recordings of two phone calls it had with Mr B during the relevant period. Although Mr B the payments that flagged were transfers from that bank into Revolut, he had been given the opportunity to explain what he intended to do with the money. But Mr B didn't tell the bank real reason for transferring money.

So, having considered the available information, I'm satisfied that Revolut appropriated intervened at the time of the disputed payments. And, due to the reassurances it received from Mr B, I don't think it acted unfairly in processing the payments.

I've also thought about whether Revolut could have done more to recover the funds once it became aware of the situation, as in some circumstances it might be possible to recover the money. It doesn't appear that Revolut reached out to the beneficiary account providers when Mr B reported the scam. That said, the scam wasn't reported until nearly a week after the last payment was made. It's very common for scammers to move funds out of the beneficiary account to avoid funds being recalled by the sender's bank. Also, the beneficiary accounts were based overseas and it's not uncommon for overseas banks to not respond to recovery requests. So, in the circumstances of what happened here, I think it's highly unlikely that recovery would have been successful.

I note that Mr B has said Revolut could have limited his loss if it hadn't blocked an incoming payment that he was expecting from the scammer. He's provided a screenshot of correspondence from Revolut which apologises for some issues with incoming payments. I can understand the point Mr B is trying to make here. However, given this was a scam, despite what they told Mr B, I'm not convinced that the scammer ever attempted to send funds to his Revolut account. It's a common feature of the scam he's described that victims are informed an attempt was made to send money, but it was blocked by the victims' account provider.

Moreover, Revolut has confirmed that although it did have some intermittent issues with incoming funds not being posted to customer accounts, if a payment Mr B had received was impacted by this issue it would have still appeared on the transaction history but with a status of 'failed' or 'reverted'. Having carefully looked at the transaction history for Mr B's account, I can't see a failed or reverted transaction for the amount Mr B submits the scammer said they had tried to send.

In summary, I fully acknowledge that there's a considerable sum of money involved here. Despite my natural sympathy for the situation in which Mr B finds himself, for the reasons given, it wouldn't be fair of me to hold Revolut responsible for his loss.

My final decision

For the reasons given, my final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 13 August 2025.

Gagandeep Singh
Ombudsman