

## **The complaint**

Mrs S complains that Metro Bank PLC will not reimburse funds she lost to a scam.

Mrs S is represented by a firm, for ease I have only referred to Mrs S in this decision.

## **What happened**

The background to this complaint is well known to both parties so I won't repeat it all again here.

In summary, Mrs S came across an advertisement on social media for a cryptocurrency investment and registered her interest. Mrs S was contacted by someone claiming to represent the investment firm and after some discussion she decided to invest. Between September 2024 and November 2024 she made payments to a bank account she opened with a business I'll refer to as R, before making payments to cryptocurrency platforms. Mrs S realised it had been a scam when she could not withdraw funds from the investment and the scammer requested that she make further payments for various fees. Mrs S later reported the matter to Metro, but it didn't reimburse the funds or uphold her complaint.

Our Investigator didn't think the complaint should be upheld. She thought Metro ought to have intervened but she didn't think it could have prevented the loss even if it did.

Mrs S didn't accept the Investigator's view, as such the matter has been passed to me for a final decision.

## **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 have come to the same outcome as our Investigator for the following reasons:

Taking into consideration the relevant regulatory rules and guidance, codes of practice and good industry practice, Metro should take steps to identify and where possible prevent sufficiently unusual or uncharacteristic payments to help protect its customers from financial harm resulting from fraud.

There was movement of funds into Mrs S's account which was then quickly debited and sent to her account with R, I think this pattern of activity and the value of the transactions ought to have raised scam concerns and caused Metro to intervene. However it has not shown it intervened in any of the payments Mrs S made.

I've considered whether intervention would have impacted Mrs S positively and prevented her loss and I'm not persuaded it would. This is because when R intervened Mrs S gave misleading information. R provided warnings highlighting key features of cryptocurrency investment scams, which I think ought reasonably to have resonated with Mrs S as the investment she was a victim of bore many of the common hallmarks of a cryptocurrency

investment scam. Despite R's warnings Mrs S opted to continue making the payments. So it follows that had Metro intervened as I think it ought to have done, I'm not persuaded Mrs S would have given accurate information and on balance I think it is unlikely its intervention would have stop Mrs S making the payments.

The payments were sent to Mrs S's account with R and used to purchase cryptocurrency, they did not remain in the account, so I am not persuaded there were any real prospects of recovering the funds.

I've thought carefully about all that's happened, I could only uphold this complaint and require Metro to reimburse Mrs S if I thought any errors on its part made a material difference, and I'm not persuaded it did.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs S to accept or reject my decision before 2 January 2026.

Oluwatobi Balogun  
**Ombudsman**