

The complaint

Ms A is complaining about Revolut Ltd because it declined to refund money she lost as a result of fraud.

What happened

Sadly, Ms A realised she'd been scammed after thinking she'd purchased a flight from a legitimate travel agent. The payment of £480 was made by card from her Revolut account in April 2025.

Our investigator didn't recommend the complaint be upheld. He didn't think Revolut should have identified the payment as suspicious before it was approved or that there was anything further it could have done to recover the money after this.

Ms A didn't accept the investigator's assessment. She re-iterated the circumstances of the scam and explained her belief that other institutions would have refunded her money in this situation.

Revolut did then go on to make an offer of a partial refund, but this was withdrawn after Ms A rejected it.

The complaint has now been referred to me for review.

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've reached the same overall conclusions as the investigator, and for broadly the same reasons. I haven't necessarily commented on every single point raised but concentrated instead on the issues I believe are central to the outcome of the complaint. This is consistent with our established role as an informal alternative to the courts. In considering this complaint I've had regard to the relevant law and regulations; any regulator's rules, guidance and standards, codes of practice, and what I consider was good industry practice at the time.

There's no dispute that Ms A authorised this payment. In broad terms, the starting position at law is that Electronic Money Institution (EMI) such as Revolut is expected to process payments a customer authorises it to make, in accordance with the Payment Services Regulations and the terms and conditions of their account. In this context, '*authorised*' essentially means the customer gave the business an instruction to make a payment from their account. In other words, they knew that money was leaving their account, irrespective of where that money actually went.

There are, however, some situations where we believe a business, taking into account relevant rules, codes and best practice standards, shouldn't have taken its customer's

authorisation instruction at 'face value' – or should have looked at the wider circumstances surrounding the transaction before making the payment.

Revolut also has a duty to exercise reasonable skill and care, pay due regard to the interests of its customers and to follow good industry practice to keep customers' accounts safe. This includes identifying vulnerable consumers who may be particularly susceptible to scams and looking out for payments which might indicate the consumer is at risk of financial harm.

Taking these things into account, I need to decide whether Revolut acted fairly and reasonably in its dealings with Ms A.

The payment

I must take into account that many similar payment instructions Revolut receives will be entirely legitimate and I also need to consider its responsibility to make payments promptly.

Having considered what Revolut knew about the payment at the time, particularly that the amount was relatively low and it wasn't part of a pattern of multiple payments consistent with many known types of scam, I'm not persuaded it ought to have identified Ms A may be at risk of harm from fraud. So, I can't reasonably conclude Revolut was at fault for processing the payment in line with her instruction.

I want to be clear that it's not my intention to suggest Ms A is to blame for what happened in any way. She fell victim to a sophisticated scam that was carefully designed to deceive and manipulate its victims. I can understand why she acted in the way she did. But my role is to consider the actions of Revolut and, having done so, I'm not persuaded these were the cause of her losses.

Recovery of funds

I've also looked at whether Revolut could or should have done more to try and recover Ms A's losses once it was aware the payment was the result of fraud.

I can see that Ms A contacted Revolut promptly after the payment was made. But the way card payments work means Revolut had to make an instant decision on whether to accept the payment instruction it was given. Although the payment may have been showing in the account as 'pending', it was already too late for Revolut to stop it by the time Ms A reported the scam. The only way the money could have returned the payment to her account was if the merchant (the scammer) didn't collect it.

The fact the payment was made by card rather than transfer means Ms A isn't eligible for a refund under the APP fraud reimbursement scheme. The appropriate method for recovering card payments is instead the chargeback scheme. This is a voluntary agreement between card providers and card issuers who set the scheme rules and is not enforced by law. A chargeback isn't guaranteed to result in a refund, there needs to be a right to a chargeback under the scheme rules.

I'd only expect Revolut to have pursued a chargeback claim if it was likely to be successful and it doesn't appear that would have been the case here. The payment was made using Revolut's two-factor authentication system and that means there was no right to reimbursement under the scheme rules.

In the circumstances, I don't think anything that Revolut could have done differently would likely have led to Ms A's money successfully recovered.

In conclusion

I recognise Ms A has been the victim of a cruel scam and I'm sorry she lost this money. I realise the outcome of this complaint will come as a great disappointment but, for the reasons I've explained, I think Revolut acted fairly and reasonably in its dealings with her and I won't be telling it to make any refund.

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 Ms A to accept or reject my decision before 5 December 2025.

James Biles
Ombudsman