Financial Ombudsman Service

The complaint

Mr C complains that Monzo Bank Ltd (Monzo) is refusing to refund him the amount he 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, Mr C met an individual I will call X via an online dating application. As the conversation developed it moved to a well-known messaging application. X explained that she worked for a bank and would teach Mr C how to invest.

X walked Mr C through the process of investing, but when Mr C attempted to make a withdrawal from the investment, he was told he would have to make further payments first.

Mr C made the following payments in relation to the scam from his Monzo account:

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
1	4 December 2024	Mr C	Transfer	£2,100
2	4 December 2024	Mr C	Transfer	£2,400

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

Recovering the payments Mr C made

The payments Mr C has disputed were made by transfer. When payments are made by transfer Monzo has limited options available to it to seek recovery.

The payments Mr C made went to an account in his own name so if any funds did remain, they would remain within Mr C's control and therefore not require recovery. In any event Mr C has confirmed that these funds were sent on to the scammer and therefore no funds remained to be recovered.

I don't think Monzo had any reasonable options available to it to seek recovery of the payments Mr C has disputed.

Should Monzo have reasonably prevented the payments Mr C made?

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

The payments Mr C has disputed were not significantly high in value, and they were being made into an account in Mr C's own name. Although two payments were made in the same day, they were not made in quick succession. When I consider the risk associated with the two disputed payments, I don't think it was unreasonable that Monzo didn't intervene or warn Mr C that he may have been falling victim to a scam.

Mr C says that when he made payment 1 Monzo asked him to provide evidence of where the money was coming into his account from, and where it was going to, and should have provided a warning at the time.

I have thought about what Mr C has told us, but as I have already said, I don't think it was unreasonable that Monzo didn't provide a warning to Mr C based on the risk associated with the payments he has disputed, so Mr C's comments don't change my decision and I don't think it was unreasonable that Monzo didn't provide a warning to Mr C when it requested further information from him.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr C to accept or reject my decision before 27 November 2025.

Terry Woodham
Ombudsman