

The complaint

Mr A complains about the actions of Revolut Ltd when he lost money to a scam.

Mr A is being represented by a claims management company but for ease of reading I'll only refer to Mr A.

What happened

The detailed background to this complaint is well known to both parties. So, I'll only provide a brief overview of some of the key events here.

In November 2023 Mr A was contacted by third-party merchants (scammers) about an investment opportunity. Between November 2023 and June 2024 Mr A made multiple payments from his Revolut account towards the scammers. He converted his funds to crypto and sent that to the scammer's wallets. He also made payments to accounts he held at genuine crypto exchanges, to third parties to purchase crypto directly from them (P2P) and made two debit card payments to other merchants. However, Mr A later realised he had been scammed when he was continually asked to pay fees to withdraw his funds. So, he raised a claim to Revolut who said it wouldn't be offering a refund because it hadn't done anything wrong. As a result, Mr A brought his complaint to this service.

Our Investigator didn't think the complaint should be upheld. He said the withdrawal of crypto wasn't a regulated activity and the exchanges Mr A made into crypto weren't sufficiently unusual for Revolut to have been concerned about.

Mr A disagreed and asked for an Ombudsman's review. He said the exchanges he made into crypto were unusual for his account before they were sent to a third-party crypto wallet. He said he answered the questions Revolut asked honestly and that Revolut should've gone further to ask questions about the payments he was making on his account. If it had done so, he would've taken notice and the scam would've been stopped.

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 conclusion as our investigator. And for largely the same reasons. I'm sorry to hear that Mr A has been the victim of a cruel scam. I know he feels strongly about this complaint, and this will come as a disappointment to him, so I'll explain why.

I've read and considered the whole file. But I'll concentrate my comments on what I think is relevant. If I don't mention any specific point, it's not because I've failed to take it on board and think about it, but because I don't think I need to comment on it to reach what I think is a fair and reasonable outcome.

Where the evidence is incomplete, inconclusive, or contradictory (as it is here), I have to make my decision on the balance of probabilities – that is, what I consider is more likely than not to have happened in the light of the available evidence and the wider surrounding circumstances.

I've considered whether Revolut should've done more to stop the exchanges of GBP into crypto and the payments Mr A made out of the account. It is common ground that Mr A authorised the exchanges, the crypto withdrawals and the payments here. I accept that these were authorised even though Mr A was the victim of a scam. So, although it wasn't his intention to pay money to the scammers, under the Payment Services Regulations 2017 (PSRs) and the terms of his account, Mr A is presumed liable for the loss in the first instance.

So, I need to decide if the activity on Mr A's account in relation to the transactions involved in this complaint were unusual enough for Revolut to have stopped some of the exchanges and payments and taken further action.

When Mr A opened the account, he said it would be used for crypto (amongst other reasons). I think given the value and the amount of the exchanges Mr A was making between 15 December 2023 and 06 January 2024, Revolut should've stopped one of the payments and asked Mr A why he was making the exchange. But I don't think I need to say which payment because I don't think Revolut taking such action would've made a difference. When Revolut stopped a payment Mr A was making to an account he held with one of the genuine crypto exchanges it asked him for the transfer reason. Mr A told Revolut he was making a payment to his own account – despite having the option to select 'crypto' or 'making an investment'.

When Mr A was making payments to third parties from his Revolut account to purchase crypto via P2P, he said he was making payments to friends and family, that he wasn't being assisted through the questionnaire and that he had paid that person before using different bank details. Again, he was offered the opportunity to tell Revolut that the reason he was making the payment was for an 'investment' but didn't select that reason. So, I think if Revolut had stopped any of the exchanges Mr A made into crypto, I think it's likely he would've provided similar answers to Revolut as he did when asked for the payment reasons that I've mentioned above, instead of selecting that he was making a payment for crypto or an investment.

I note Revolut would've been reasonably aware of the payments being made to genuine crypto exchanges, so it reasonably should've provided some crypto investment scam warnings if it had stopped some of the payments Mr A made here. But I don't think those warnings would've resonated with Mr A in the circumstances. I can see Mr A was taken in by a very sophisticated scam where the scammers cloned the names of genuine businesses. Mr A also persuaded friends and family to invest because he was satisfied with the research he had done and the paperwork he had received.

I also think Revolut should've been concerned about the larger payments Mr A made to the crypto exchanges. I can see he made two payments for around £10,000 each and that should've been considered suspicious by Revolut. However, I think even if Revolut had invited Mr A into the in-app chat to discuss the payment, I think he would've provided similar answers to the ones he gave on the other interventions. Mr A says that if Revolut had asked about the onward payment journey, he would've been honest. However, I don't find that to be persuasive here and is more likely than not being said with the benefit of hindsight. I think the interventions Revolut made closer to the time provide a better understanding of how Mr A would've likely responded to any further interventions from Revolut. He was given various opportunities to tell Revolut that he was making the payment for investment purposes but

failed to mention that. So, if Revolut had asked him in the chat further questions, I don't think Mr A would've more likely than not mentioned that he was making the payments as an investment with the help of a third-party.

I've also considered the interventions of other banks that Mr A used to make the payments towards the scam. Having done so, I note that one of his other banks stopped payments and asked him why he was sending money for a P2P payment. He was warned about crypto investments, that it was high-risk and that sometimes P2P payments turn out to be involved in scams. Mr A also denied that he was told to buy the crypto from a third-party via a messaging platform (which was untrue) and that the payment was for himself. He also told his bank that he knew trading and that he was aware of the risks.

So, I'm satisfied that Mr A did receive warnings from his bank about crypto and P2P payments but was happy to continue. He didn't tell the bank nor Revolut that his payments were being made in relation to a third party and that he understood the risks of investing in crypto.

As a result, I'm not satisfied that any further interventions would've more than likely led to any other outcome than Mr A wanting to make the payments from his Revolut account.

Recovery

Mr A made payments via various methods here. Revolut can't recover the crypto withdrawals as that money has been sent to the scammer and can't be reversed. The withdrawal of crypto isn't a regulated activity either as our Investigator has explained which means I'm unable to comment further in relation to the recovery of the crypto he sent. The payments Mr A made via P2P and directly to the genuine crypto exchanges were then used to purchase crypto and sent to the scammer, so no funds were available to recover.

Revolut only tried to recover one of the two payments Mr A made by debit card to two merchants. That's because one of the payments was made outside the 120-day time limit for raising a chargeback. The other payment was refunded to Mr A's account by Revolut. I appreciate this will likely come as a disappointment to Mr A, and I'm sorry to hear of the situation he's found himself in. However, in the circumstances of this complaint, I don't consider it would be fair and reasonable to hold Revolut responsible for Mr A's claimed loss. And because I don't think I can reasonably conclude Revolut treated Mr A unreasonably here, I'm not going to ask it to do anything more.

My final decision

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 A to accept or reject my decision before 19 November 2025.

Mark Dobson
Ombudsman