

The complaint

Mr M complains that Revolut Ltd has declined to reimburse payments made in relation to an investment scam.

What happened

As the parties are familiar with the facts of this case, I'll summarise them briefly.

In January 2023, Mr M saw an advert on social media showing a well-known celebrity endorsing an investment opportunity. Mr M was then in contact with scammers who initially asked him to invest and later required payments to access his 'profits'. As part of the scam Mr M set up other accounts, including one with Revolut, and provided remote access to his device.

Mr M is still disputing two card payments from his Revolut account in May 2023, for £20 and £3,200, to a cryptocurrency platform.

Revolut declined to reimburse the payments on the basis that it considered the payments authorised and that it didn't have grounds to raise a successful chargeback in the circumstances.

When Mr M referred the matter to our service, the investigator didn't uphold the complaint. In summary they thought Mr M had authorised the disputed payments and that when Revolut did intervene Mr M wanted to continue with the payment.

Mr M didn't agree; he said he didn't think his circumstances had been fully taken into account. So, the matter has been passed to me for consideration 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.

Having done so, I'm not upholding this complaint for similar reasons to the investigator.

Has Revolut acted fairly in treating the disputed payments as authorised?

The relevant law here is the Payment Services Regulations 2017 (PSRs) – these set out the circumstances in which a payer (here Mr M) and a payment service provider (here Revolut) are liable for payments. As a starting point, Mr M is liable for payments that he authorised and Revolut should reimburse unauthorised payments.

Mr M has told us that he was directed by the scammer to move money, but he's also said that the scammer had remote access, and they were in control. So, it's not clear if Mr M made all of the payments himself or allowed the scammer to access the account to make them. But it doesn't appear to be in dispute that Mr M was aware of the payments at the time. The larger payment here was approved in Mr M's banking app and he later engaged in an in-app chat about it with Revolut which involved sharing a live selfie. Based on this, I think

it's fair to treat the payments as authorised, as they were either made by Mr M or on his behalf with his consent.

Did Revolut miss an opportunity to prevent Mr M's loss?

In broad terms, the starting position at law is that 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 PSRs and the terms and conditions of the customer's account.

But, taking into account longstanding regulatory expectations and requirements, and what I consider to be good industry practice, Revolut ought to have been on the look-out for the possibility of fraud and made additional checks before processing payments in some circumstances.

I wouldn't have expected Revolut to intervene in the first payment of £20 due to its low value. But given this was a relatively new account and the value of the second payment to an identifiably cryptocurrency platform I think it was right that Revolut identified Mr M was at a heightened risk of financial harm from fraud at that point.

Revolut warned Mr M that it thought it was highly likely the payment was related to a scam. To establish whether this was the case Revolut asked Mr M a series of questions. Mr M provided misleading and inaccurate answers – for example, when asked if he was investing after learning about an investment opportunity advertised on social media he answered no. He also answered no when asked if he had been told to create a Revolut account for investment purposes. Mr M has told us he was being coached and pressured by the scammers, and that he didn't have control over the cryptocurrency wallet. But he told Revolut that he had access to the account and had been able to withdraw funds.

I do appreciate Mr M was pressured and manipulated into misleading Revolut and I'm not passing judgement on his character, but based on the answers he gave I don't think Revolut did anything wrong in allowing the payment. I understand Mr M may have been vulnerable at the time, and that the losses from this scam have had a significant impact on him but for the reasons explained I don't think Revolut has done anything wrong in the circumstances.

Could Revolut have done anything else to recover Mr M's money?

The payments were made by card and so the recovery option that would have been available to Revolut would have been through the chargeback scheme. This is a scheme run by the card scheme provider to resolve payment disputes between customers and merchants – subject to the rules they set. As the scheme is voluntary and limited in scope, Revolut wouldn't be expected to raise a claim that it thought had no prospect of success.

Here, the payments were card payments were made to a cryptocurrency platform. I'm not persuaded there would have been any reasonable prospect for a chargeback claim succeeding. This is because the payments would be considered authorised, and the merchant would likely be able to demonstrate that it had provided the agreed service.

My final decision

For the reasons explained, 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 M to accept or reject my decision before 1 October 2025.

Stephanie Mitchell
Ombudsman