

The complaint and background

Miss B complains that Monzo Bank Ltd (“Monzo”) won’t reimburse over £18,000 that she lost when she fell victim to a scam in February 2025. She believed she was making payments to recover funds lost to an earlier scam.

Our investigator didn’t uphold the complaint. Although she found Monzo ought to have intervened with the payments, she wasn’t persuaded that would have prevented Miss B’s loss. That was because when other financial providers intervened with payments being made, Miss B provided inaccurate responses to their questions. She wasn’t persuaded that Miss B would have answered in a substantially different way if Monzo had intervened and questioned the transactions, the first of which was made within two days of those interventions.

Miss B’s representative asked for the matter to be referred to an ombudsman. It believes that appropriate questioning would have prevented the loss. It said that as Monzo was the final route available to Miss B, there would have been no further avenue for the scammer to exploit.

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

I agree with the investigator and Miss B’s representative that Monzo ought to have intervened with the payments being made. These payments were identifiably being made to a cryptocurrency exchange, and the values of the payments should have alerted Monzo to the possibility that Miss B was at risk of financial harm. I’m surprised that they were processed without intervention, particularly given the prevalence of cryptocurrency scams in 2025. But, that being said, I can only uphold this complaint if I’m persuaded that a proportionate intervention would have prevented her loss. And, based on the evidence I’ve been provided with, I’m not.

I say this because, as outlined by the investigator, two other financial providers had intervened with payments in the days just prior. And Miss B provided inaccurate responses to the questions they posed. When asked why she was transferring money to her Monzo account, she said it was for its budgeting features and her own day-to-day use, though the funds were promptly sent to the cryptocurrency exchange. And when the topic of investing in cryptocurrency arose, she expressed that she’d done her own research, hadn’t spoken with anyone and hadn’t been given any tips. But this wasn’t the case as she was speaking to an individual who she believed would be helping her to recover her lost funds.

Miss B's representative has said that Monzo was the final route available to her. But, when factoring in the involvement of the other two financial providers, it would appear that she took the actions she needed to ensure these payments were made – which included opening this new Monzo account. So I think it likely she would have looked for an alternative way to ensure the payments were made, as she believed this was how she would recover the money she'd previously lost to a scam.

I've not seen sufficient evidence to persuade me that Miss B would have provided accurate information if Monzo had proportionately intervened. Instead, I think it more likely than not that she would have continued to answer questions in such a way that would have minimised the perceived risk of the payments she was trying to make.

Whilst Miss B has undoubtedly been the victim of a cruel scam, I can only uphold her complaint if I'm satisfied Monzo's failings made a material difference to what happened. For the reasons given, I'm not persuaded they did.

My final decision

For the reasons given, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss B to accept or reject my decision before 9 January 2026.

Melanie van der Waals
Ombudsman