

## The complaint

Ms A complains that Lloyds Bank PLC (Lloyds) is refusing to refund her the amount she lost as the result of a scam.

Ms A is being represented by a third party. To keep things simple, I will refer to Ms A throughout my decision.

## What happened

The background of this complaint is well known to all parties, so I won't repeat what happened in detail.

In summary, Ms A has told us that she was actively looking for job opportunities when she came across a listing on a well-known job site. Ms A was then contacted by an individual via a well-known messaging application claiming to be a recruiter offering a job with a company I will call "X".

Ms A was told she would need to complete multiple tasks each day and would earn a commission for each task. Ms A was also added to a group chat that appeared to include other people involved in the same job.

Ms A was asked to open a cryptocurrency account to facility payments in relation to the role.

As Ms A completed tasks, she could see her balance was falling below £0. As a result, Ms A was required to top up her account to continue with the tasks.

Ms A attempted to withdraw from the investment but was given multiple reasons why she needed to continue making payments and eventually she realised she had fallen victim to a scam.

Ms A has disputed the following payments made in relation to the scam:

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
1	13 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£20
2	13 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£84
3	17 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£80
4	17 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£78
5	17 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£145
6	17 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£100
7	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£2,160
8	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£50
9	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£2.50
10	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£5,130 (checked)
11	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£4,000 (checked)
12	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£4,000
13	18 February 2025	ClearBank – Ms A	Transfer	£4,000
14	19 February 2025	Revolut – Ms A	Transfer	£1,000

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

#### *Recovering the payments Ms A made*

Ms A made payments into the scam via transfer. But Ms A didn't make the payments to the scammer directly. Instead, she made payments to accounts in her own name. As it took further steps for those funds to end up in the hands of the scammer, any attempt to recover the payments would have no chance of success.

#### *Should Lloyds have reasonably prevented the payments Ms A made?*

It has been accepted that Ms A authorised the payments that were made from her account with Lloyds, albeit on the scammer's instruction. So, the starting point here is that Ms A 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 Lloyds 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 first payments Ms A made in relation to the scam were not of such a significant value that I think Lloyds should have had concerns that Ms A could have been at risk of financial harm.

Although by the time Ms A made payment 10, I think Lloyds should have had concerns. The payment was for a much more significant value, and I think Lloyds should reasonably have been aware that the payment was being made in relation to cryptocurrency.

I can see that Lloyds did intervene when Ms A attempted several payments and several calls took place between Ms A and Lloyds on 18 February 2025.

#### *Call 1*

During this call Ms A explained she had been trying to make a payment for £5,130. When asked what the reason for the payment was, Ms A said it was to move money to another of her own accounts. Ms A said she used the other account for her daily spending and that she also paid bills from that account.

Ms A received a warning about other customers falling victim to investment scams and cryptocurrency investment scams, and scams involving other companies that appear to be trusted and known by the customer.

### *Call 2*

During this call Ms A explained she was making a payment to her other bank account and she had been asked to call in.

Ms A said she was making the payment to another of her personal accounts that was a £ account. The Lloyds representative said, *"I can see it's a crypto account"*, Ms A responded saying *"yes but it's a £ account"*.

### *Call 3*

During this call Ms A explained she had attempted two payments for £4,000 and £3,500.

Ms A confirmed she was transferring the payments to another of her accounts. When Ms A was asked for the reason she was making the payments, she said she used the account to transfer funds home and to make payments, it was easier to use that account for those reasons.

The Lloyds representative said he could see the recipient account was with a cryptocurrency provider and checked if the payment was related to a cryptocurrency investment. Ms A confirmed it was not it was a normal £ account.

Ms A then received a warning about the potential of safe account scams where customers have been asked to move money to another account to keep it safe.

Ms A further confirmed she had not been asked to make any payments in relation to cryptocurrency investment, and she had not been asked to mislead the bank in anyway.

Having listened to the calls I think it's clear that Lloyds were aware Ms A was making payments in relation to cryptocurrency, to a cryptocurrency provider for most of the payments. The only payment she didn't make to the provider went to an account at another provider for a value I would not have expected to have caused Lloyds concerns prompting it to intervene.

I think Lloyds should have intervened further than it did and asked other questions related specifically to payments made in relation to cryptocurrency. But I don't think further intervention would have made a difference. I say this because:

It's clear that Ms A was willing to give false information to Lloyds, likely on the advice of the scammer, and give different reasons for the payments she was making. Ms A was asked multiple times the reasons she was making the payments and didn't provide accurate information or even reveal she was making the payments in relation to a job, yet she still received general warnings covering investment scams.

Based on the evidence available, I think it's unlikely Ms A would have revealed she was making payments in relation to a job if further questions were asked by Lloyds and she appeared adamant to make the payments.

Providing inaccurate information to Lloyds would and did make it difficult for Lloyds to uncover the scam that was taking place. With all the information available, I don't think Lloyds missed an opportunity to uncover the scam and it is not responsible for Ms A's loss.

### **My final decision**

I don't 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 20 January 2026.

Terry Woodham  
**Ombudsman**