

The complaint

M complains that Revolut Ltd won't refund money it lost to a scam.

Mr A is the director of M and is represented by a firm, but for ease, I have mostly referred to Mr A in my decision.

What happened

The background to this complaint is well known to both parties so I won't repeat it in detail here. Mr A made the following payments as a result of a cryptocurrency investment scam.

	Date	Type of Transaction and merchant	Amount
1	22 August 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£9,000.00
	22 August 2023	Payment from crypto exchange	£8,973.00
2	22 August 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£8,973.00
	22 August 2023	Refund from crypto exchange	£8,973.00
3	23 August 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£9,000.00
4	02 September 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£14,535.00
	02 September 2023	Refund from crypto exchange	£14,535.00
5	02 September 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£14,535.00
6	13 September 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£12,750.00
7	14 September 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£1,400.00
8	26 September 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£13,200.00
9	17 October 2023	Bank Transfer to crypto exchange	£21,250.00
	17 October 2023	Refund from crypto exchange	£21,250.00
10	17 October 2023	Bank Transfer to third party.	£21,000.00

Mr A received a message from an individual he did not know and after some discussion they introduced him to a cryptocurrency investment opportunity. Several payments were made to cryptocurrency platforms before the funds were then sent on to the scammer. Mr A said that when he could not make any further payments to the investment the scammer stopped contact. He realised it had been a scam as he could not withdraw his funds. Mr A raised the matter with Revolut, but it did not refund the money M lost nor did it uphold the complaint.

Our investigator didn't think the complaint should be upheld. She thought Revolut ought to have identified that M was at risk of financial harm from fraud and done more to establish the circumstances surrounding the payments. However our investigator thought Mr A would have still wanted to go ahead with the payments even if it had done so.

Mr A didn't accept our investigator's opinion and as such, the complaint has been passed to me for a final decision.

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 agree with the outcome our investigator reached for the following reasons:

Taking into consideration the relevant regulatory rules and guidance, codes of practice and good industry practice, Revolut should have looked at the wider circumstances surrounding the transaction before making the payment and taken steps to keep its customer's accounts safe. Therefore, it ought to look out for payments which might indicate that its customer is at risk of financial harm due to fraud.

Revolut said as the funds were sent as bank transfers it would not have known they related to the purchase of cryptocurrency. However I think it ought to have been able to identify this from the information it had to hand about the destination and the recipient of the funds. Even if I were to accept that it could not recognise the payments as cryptocurrency purchases, I find it still ought to have found the payments carried a heightened risk of harm from fraud and intervened.

I accept this was a newly opened account and Revolut had limited information about the typical account usage it could rely on. Nevertheless the payments were of significant value, they were made to a number of different payees and there were several large deposits into the account which were quickly debited, draining the account balance. The value of the payments increased significantly particularly at the point of the final payment, which is a pattern indicative of a scam. Considering this, I think Revolut ought to have been concerned about the risk of fraud. An appropriate response to the risk the payments posed would have been to direct Mr A to its in-app chat to discuss the payments with a member of staff in order to establish the circumstances surrounding them. Revolut said it intervened in the final payments Mr A made from the account. It said it asked a series of questions and gave a warning regarding the risk of a safe account scam. I don't find its intervention proportionate to the identifiable risk.

I have considered whether Revolut would have been able to prevent the scam had it intervened as I described above and I don't think it would. I have reviewed Mr A's conversations with the scammer and I find he had built a relationship with the individual and was under their spell. He had agreed to mislead his banks or e-money providers if questioned about the payments. I find Mr A was determined to make the payments and had received coaching from the scammer on several transactions he made in relation to this scam. So it follows that Had Revolut intervened as I think it should have done, I'm not persuaded it would have been able to uncover the scam and prevent M's loss. As such, I can't fairly or reasonably hold Revolut responsible for the loss.

Revolut said it attempted to recover the funds from the beneficiary banks, but it has not received a response. Considering that several months had passed before the scam was reported and that many payments were made to legitimate merchants for the purchase of cryptocurrency I am not persuaded there were any prospects of recovering the funds.

I've thought carefully about everything that happened, I appreciate that M and Mr A have been victims of a cruel scam and the loss experienced was significant. While I sympathise, I could only uphold this complaint and require Revolut to refund the payments if I thought any

errors on its part would have made a material difference and I'm not persuaded that they would.

My final decision

For the reasons outlined above, my final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask M to accept or reject my decision before 7 October 2025.

Oluwatobi Balogun
Ombudsman