

The complaint

Mr B is complaining that Revolut Ltd hasn't refunded payments he made as part of a scam.

The complaint has been brought on Mr B's behalf by a professional representative, but I'll mainly refer to Mr B here.

What happened

Both parties are familiar with the circumstances of the complaint, so I'll only summarise things here.

In May 2025 Mr B fell victim to an employment scam. He reports that on the instruction of the scammer, he made 14 payments totalling £7,448.45 to his wallet with a cryptocurrency exchange (and then on to the scam) between 23 May 2025 and 26 May 2025.

Revolut learned of what had happened when Mr B brought a complaint to it in July 2025. But it responded to Mr B's complaint to say, in summary, that it had taken sufficient steps to protect Mr B from a scam when the payments were made.

Mr B brought his complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service, but our Investigator didn't think it should be upheld. She identified an additional payment of £30 that appeared to also have been lost to the scam and considered that too. But she said, in summary, that Revolut had taken steps to establish the circumstances of the payments and warn Mr B but because he hadn't been accurate in how he answered its questions the scam wasn't uncovered. And she didn't think Revolut could have done anything else to recover Mr B's funds once the scam had been reported.

Mr B didn't agree, so his complaint has been passed to me for review and a 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'm not upholding Mr B's complaint - for much the same reasons as the Investigator.

In broad terms, the starting position at law is that an 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 Payment Services Regulations (in this case the 2017 regulations) and the terms and conditions of the customer's account.

But, taking into account relevant law, regulators rules and guidance, relevant codes of practice and what I consider to have been good industry practice at the time, I consider it fair and reasonable in May 2025 that Revolut should:

- have been monitoring accounts and any payments made or received to counter various risks, including preventing fraud and scams;
- have had systems in place to look out for unusual transactions or other signs that might indicate that its customers were at risk of fraud (among other things). This is particularly so given the increase in sophisticated fraud and scams in recent years, which firms are generally more familiar with than the average customer;
- have acted to avoid causing foreseeable harm to customers, for example by maintaining adequate systems to detect and prevent scams and by ensuring all aspects of its products, including the contractual terms, enabled it to do so;
- in some circumstances, have taken additional steps, or made additional checks, or provided additional warnings, before processing a payment; and
- have been mindful of – among other things – common scam scenarios, how the fraudulent practices are evolving (including for example the common use of multi-stage fraud by scammers, including the use of payments to cryptocurrency accounts as a step to defraud consumers) and the different risks these can present to consumers, when deciding whether to intervene.

However, I must also bear in mind that EMI's such as Revolut have a balance to strike - while it should be alert to fraud and scams and act in its customers' best interests, it processes high volumes of transactions each day and can't reasonably be involved in all of them.

Mr B opened his account with Revolut shortly before he made the payments, so there wasn't any account history available for Revolut to decide if the payments appeared to be out of character. But he said that the reason for opening his account was to transfer funds to buy cryptocurrency.

There has been some discussion between Mr B's representative and the Investigator about the earliest point at which Revolut ought to have intervened in the payments, but I don't need to decide this point as it doesn't affect the outcome of the complaint. This is because Revolut did intervene, on two of the payments Mr B made to the scam, and I think Revolut's interventions were proportionate in the circumstances. I'll explain why.

The first time it intervened, Revolut asked Mr B for the purpose of the payment. Although the option of "*it's related to a job opportunity*" was available to select, Mr B chose that he was transferring funds to his other account. I accept this was also true, so I don't think Mr B necessarily intended to mislead Revolut here. But because he didn't select this option, Revolut wasn't able to immediately identify the risk of an employment scam from this question.

Revolut asked Mr B some further questions which he appears to have answered broadly accurately. Following this, Revolut showed Mr B a scam warning that related to the risk it had identified (in this case, an impersonation scam warning). Although this warning wasn't relevant to the scam Mr B was experiencing, the intervention from Revolut was proportionate to the risk displayed in the account activity at that stage and I wouldn't have expected it to have done anything else here.

Revolut intervened again on a later payment. It asked Mr B the same questions as it had on the earlier payment, and Mr B answered them in the same way. But this time Revolut wasn't satisfied that this intervention was proportionate to the risk it had identified in Mr B's account activity and it told Mr B it would be calling him to discuss the payments.

The questions Revolut asked in this call were initially focused on cryptocurrency investment scams based on the way in which Mr B had answered its questions so far, and the destination of the payments - but some of the questions Revolut asked were also relevant to the employment scam Mr B was experiencing. I've summarised the relevant points of the conversation below.

Revolut's adviser asked Mr B if anyone had suggested he use Revolut, because scammers often suggest using particular platforms, and Mr B said he'd done it all himself. He also said the funds would stay in his own cryptocurrency account for investment savings. He confirmed he wouldn't be transferring the cryptocurrency to any other platform. He again said he'd done all this for himself and knew what he was doing.

Revolut also explained the context of its questions, in that losses to a scam often occur when funds are transferred on to a third-party wallet or a fake investment platform. Revolut also gave him the opportunity to share any concerns at the end of the call. It then told him that there was a high chance he was being scammed and asked him to confirm he accepted the risk of losing his funds, which he did.

We don't have the section of Mr B's chat with the scammer which corresponds with when he opened an account with Revolut but given the timing of when he opened his Revolut account and the fact he had been guided by the scammer to activate the cryptocurrency account, I do think it's possible he had also been guided by the scammer into opening a Revolut account to fund the scam payments. So, I'm not sure he answered Revolut's question about this accurately. But we do know Mr B was in fact transferring his cryptocurrency on to a third-party wallet rather than holding it in his own wallet, so it's clear he wasn't being open and honest with Revolut about what was happening here.

I think if Mr B had answered Revolut's questions accurately then it could potentially have asked further questions - such as asking why he was transferring the cryptocurrency to a third-party - and then identified that what was happening had the hallmarks of an employment scam. And it could have then gone on to give Mr B a relevant scam warning. But Mr B didn't answer the questions accurately and he told Revolut he was buying cryptocurrency to keep himself as an investment. So, while Revolut didn't give Mr B an employment scam warning, I don't think this was because Revolut didn't do what it reasonably should have to try to identify the specific scam risk here; it was because Mr B's answers to its questions hadn't identified this particular scam risk. But this doesn't mean Revolut's interventions weren't proportionate in all the circumstances. I think that they were, and I wouldn't have expected Revolut to have done anything else here.

There are industry standards around attempting recovery of funds where a scam is reported. Generally, businesses should attempt to recover payments immediately on being told of a scam. I can see that Revolut did attempt to recover the payments shortly after Mr B complained about the scam but unsurprisingly it wasn't successful – because as we know the beneficiary account belonged to Mr B, and he'd already moved the funds on from there.

I'm sorry to disappoint Mr B. He's been the victim of a cruel scam and I can appreciate why he'd think he should get his money back. But for the reasons I've explained, I don't think Revolut should reasonably have done anything else to prevent his loss. So, it wouldn't be reasonable for me to ask it to refund the payments he made.

My final decision

My final decision is that I'm not upholding Mr B's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 26 February 2026.

Helen Sutcliffe
Ombudsman