

## The complaint

Mr W complains that Monzo Bank Ltd ('Monzo') won't refund him the money he lost after he fell victim to an Authorised Push Payment ('APP') scam.

In bringing his complaint to this service Mr W is represented.

## What happened

I issued a provisional decision for this complaint on 27 November 2025. In it I set out the background and my proposed findings. I've included a copy of the provisional decision at the end of this final decision, in italics. I won't then repeat all of what was said here.

Both parties have now had an opportunity to respond to the provisional decision.

Monzo didn't raise any further arguments. Through his representatives, Mr W responded, but didn't accept the findings within the provisional decision. In summary, Mr W's representatives said while it is recognised Mr W was significantly influenced by the scammers, it could be argued that a more robust intervention by Monzo was necessary. And given the circumstances Monzo could have suspended the transactions and offered Mr W additional protection.

As all parties have now had the opportunity to respond, I'm going on to issue my 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.

I've considered Mr W's further comments, but these don't change my outcome here. Mr W has argued, in summary, that there were critical signals with what was happening that ought to have led Monzo to take further action to protect him.

I acknowledge the points that Mr W's representatives have raised and, as detailed in my provisional decision, I agree that I think there was an opportunity for Monzo to have picked up on things that could have indicated that Mr W was at risk of financial harm and it could have intervened further. However, as I went on to say in the provisional decision, this, in and of itself, isn't enough to say that Monzo is responsible for refunding Mr W the money he sadly lost. I'd also have to be persuaded that any further, proportionate, intervention would have made a difference – and for the reasons explained in my provisional decision I don't think it would have.

I also agree that Monzo ought to be on alert to the possibility that a customer may be coached. But sadly, in the circumstances of this case and as explained in my provisional decision, such was the extent of Mr W's belief in the fraudsters, that I'm not persuaded that I can reasonably conclude that it's more likely than not, that any further proportionate interventions would have made a difference. I'm satisfied that the evidence supports that it is

more likely than not that Mr W would have moved passed any further warnings, under the guidance of the fraudsters, and it wouldn't have prevented him from making further payments.

I am sorry that Mr W has lost money in this way, and he does have my sympathy. But based on the evidence I've seen, it wouldn't be fair or reasonable for me to ask Monzo to refund him the money he has sadly lost.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons I've given above and in my provisional decision, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr W to accept or reject my decision before 12 January 2026.

### *Provisional Decision*

*I've considered the relevant information about this complaint.*

*I intend to reach a different outcome to that of the Investigator. And in doing so, I wanted to give both parties an opportunity to respond with any further points before issuing my final decision.*

*The deadline for both parties to provide any further comments or evidence for me to consider is 11 December 2025. Unless the information changes my mind, my final decision is likely to be along the following lines.*

*If I don't hear from Mr W, or if they tell me they accept my provisional decision, I may arrange for the complaint to be closed as resolved without a final decision.*

### **The complaint**

*Mr W complains that Monzo Ltd ('Monzo') won't refund him the money he lost after he fell victim to a scam.*

*In bringing his complaint to this service Mr W is represented, but for ease of reading I will refer to Mr W, throughout this decision.*

### **What happened**

*The background to this complaint is well known to both parties and has been laid out in detail by our Investigator in their view, so I won't repeat it all in detail here. But in summary, I understand it to be as follows.*

*In or around December 2024, Mr W saw an online advert, for an investment opportunity that was endorsed by a politician and a well-known celebrity. Mr W registered his interest and was subsequently contacted by, and began communicating with, somebody about the investment. Believing everything to be genuine, Mr W proceeded with the investment, but unknown to him at the time, he had been contacted by fraudsters.*

*To facilitate the payments, Mr W sent funds from his Monzo account to a cryptocurrency account in his own name. With the payments subsequently then being moved on to accounts*

the fraudsters controlled. Mr W also took a loan with Monzo, to enable him to make some of the payments.

A breakdown of the transactions made as part of the scam is listed below.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>To/From</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1	17/12/24	13:19	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£20.00
	17/12/24		Cryptocurrency Platform	Credit	+ £98.10
2	18/12/24	12:32	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£2,000.00
3	19/12/24	08:56	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£5,500.00
	20/12/24		Loan	Credit	£11,100.00
4	20/12/24	13:16	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£9,990.00
5	21/12/24	09:04	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£1,050.00
6	24/12/24	09:52	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£5,040.00
7	24/12/24	15:31	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£4,540.00
8	27/12/24	12:47	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£9,990.00
9	06/01/25	11:32	Cryptocurrency Platform	Faster payment	£1,990.00
	07/01/25		Cryptocurrency Platform	Credit	+ £1,693.79

Monzo's fraud detection systems picked up a number of payments Mr W attempted. It blocked his account and had conversations with him on 18 and 27 December 2024. A further call took place on 28 December 2024, where Monzo informed Mr W that he had been the victim of a scam. However, following this call, Mr W still went ahead and liaised with the fraudsters and made a further payment to the fraudsters on 6 January 2025.

Mr W finally realised he'd fallen victim to a scam, when Monzo contacted him again on 7 January 2025, discussed what had happened and reiterated that this was a scam and he should stop contact with the fraudsters. Mr W raised the matter with Monzo, but it didn't uphold his complaint. In summary, it didn't think it was at fault for processing the transfers that Mr W authorised.

Unhappy with Monzo's response, Mr W brought his complaint to this service. One of our Investigators looked into things and thought the complaint should be upheld in part. In summary, it was our Investigator's view that, had it intervened, Monzo would have been able to prevent the scam at the point Mr W was making the fourth payment to the fraudsters. So, our Investigator thought Monzo was at least in part liable for Mr W's loss. But our Investigator also thought Mr W should bear some responsibility for his loss. In summary this was because she thought there was enough going on that ought to have led him to have concerns about the legitimacy of what was being offered.

Mr W agreed with our Investigator's view, but Monzo disagreed. As agreement couldn't be reached, the complaint has been passed to me for a decision.

### **What I've provisionally 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.

*I'm very aware that I've summarised this complaint briefly, in less detail than has been provided, and in my own words. No discourtesy is intended by this. Instead, I've focussed on what I think is the heart of the matter here. If there's something I've not mentioned, it isn't because I've ignored it. I haven't. I'm satisfied I don't need to comment on every individual point or argument to be able to reach what I think is the right outcome. Our rules allow me to do this. This simply reflects the informal nature of our service as a free alternative to the courts.*

*Having thought about everything carefully, I'm minded to say that I don't think Monzo is responsible for refunding the money Mr W sadly lost. I'm sorry to hear that Mr W has been the victim of what was a cruel scam. I know he feels strongly about this complaint, and this will come as a disappointment to him, so I'll explain why.*

*I'm satisfied Mr W 'authorised' the payments for the purposes of the Payment Services Regulations 2017 ('the Regulations'), in force at the time. So, although he didn't intend the money to go to scammers, under the Regulations, and under the terms and conditions of his account, Mr W is presumed liable for the loss in the first instance.*

*However, that isn't the end of the story. Good industry practice required that Monzo be on the lookout for payments that were out of character or unusual to the extent that they might have indicated a fraud risk. On spotting such a payment, I'd expect it to intervene in a manner proportionate to the risk identified.*

*In this case, I need to decide whether Monzo acted fairly and reasonably in its dealings with Mr W when it processed the payments, or whether it should have done more than it did.*

*Firms, such as Monzo, process a high volume of transfers and transactions each day. And a balance has to be struck as to when it should possibly intervene on a payment(s) against not holding up or delaying its customer's requests.*

*I have seen that Monzo did have its own suspicions and intervened on a number of the payments that Mr W made, blocking his account until it had spoken to him, before then unblocking his account. It was our Investigator's view that Monzo's intervention didn't go far enough. She thought that Monzo had missed opportunities to pick up on red flags and that a more robust intervention at the point Mr W was making the fourth payment would have made a difference.*

*I can see that Monzo did initially intervene at the point when the consumer was making the second payment to the fraudster (a payment for £2,000 on 18/12/24). The evidence from the chats that Mr W had with the fraudsters supports that he was in contact with the fraudsters at the time the payments were being made and seemingly being guided. During the call it is clear that Mr W was intentionally providing answers that were misleading when Monzo was questioning him about the payment. This is evident with Mr W telling Monzo that he hadn't downloaded any software to allow others access, which the evidence from the chat with the fraudster suggested he had done. He also told Monzo that he wasn't communicating with anybody and that he wasn't moving funds to another cryptocurrency wallet, which again were not accurate answers.*

*Furthermore, both during and after calls, Monzo did give some context to Mr W around how investment scams typically play out – this included detailing key hallmarks of what was happening with Mr W's own situation, such as; being offered high returns, being asked to download remote access software and investments being endorsed by celebrities. But Mr W confirmed to Monzo that none of that rang true with him. In answering as he did, it essentially hindered Monzo's ability to uncover the scam.*

*I agree with our Investigator, that at the point Mr W then went on to make the fourth payment, there was enough going on that Monzo ought to have intervened again. This payment represented a significant uplift in value, to a payee that was identifiably linked to cryptocurrency and meant that Mr W had sent over £17,000 within the space of just a couple of days. The payment was also out of kilter with how the account was typically run and importantly, Monzo would have been able to see that the payment was funded by a loan that the consumer had taken out, through Monzo, which he had indicated was for home improvements.*

*But this in and of itself, isn't enough for me to say that Monzo should refund Mr W the money he lost. Although it's arguable that Monzo could have done more than it did, I also need to be persuaded, and this is ultimately the crux of this complaint, that any further proportionate intervention/questioning would have made a difference and prevented the payments from being made. Of course I can't know for sure what would have happened, so I have to base my findings on the balance of probabilities – that is, what I think is more likely than not to have happened, taking into account what I know.*

*Had Monzo intervened again I think a proportionate response to the risk would have been for it to have attempted to establish some further detail surrounding the payment before allowing it to debit Mr W's account. I think it should have done this by contacting Mr W (as it had done previously) to discuss the payment further. But I'm not persuaded, in the individual circumstances of this case, that such an intervention would have made a difference and stopped Mr W from proceeding with the payments.*

*I say that because the evidence I've seen supports that Mr W was more likely than not under the spell of the fraudsters and was determined to make these payments. From what I've seen Mr W had been subject to social engineering and was being coached by the scammer, which can be seen in the first call that Monzo had with Mr W, when he misled Monzo with the answers he gave. During a later call, Mr W also said that it was his son that was helping him, rather than divulge what was actually happening, that he had been contacted and was being advised.*

*I am very mindful, and I've thought carefully about this, that Monzo could have probed further given what was happening and picked up more on some of the answers Mr W gave, such as that he had taken a loan, indicating it was for home improvements and then used the funds to facilitate a payment to cryptocurrency. And he also indicated to Monzo that he'd heard about cryptocurrency investments from the Prime Minister directly – both of which were potential red flags.*

*However, Monzo did make it quite clear to Mr W during one of the calls it had with him the risk of deep fake videos. It also highlighted the concerns it had that Mr W was sending a lot of money to cryptocurrency and of the scam risk that was present. But I'm not persuaded that even if Monzo had pressed this further it would have made a difference. I say that as even after receiving these warnings Mr W continued to communicate with the fraudster. Indeed, it seems apparent such was his belief, or hope, that this was genuine, that after being told by Monzo that this was a scam, in late December 2024, and that the video he'd seen was likely fake, Mr W was still persuaded by the fraudsters to make a further payment.*

*Overall, based on the evidence I've seen I'm minded to say that Mr W was under the spell of the fraudsters and despite warnings from his bank, still believed that things were legitimate. Given the individual circumstances of this case, I'm not persuaded that it would be fair or reasonable for me to conclude that it's more likely than not that any further proportionate interventions by Monzo could have broken that spell nor prevented Mr W from making the payments.*

*I've thought about whether Monzo did all it could to recover Mr W's money once he had reported the scam to it. But given Mr W sent money to other accounts he held, before then exchanging it into cryptocurrency and then moving it on to accounts controlled by the fraudsters, there was little prospect of Monzo being able to recover any of the money.*

*I don't intend any comments or findings I've made in this decision to downplay the impact this scam has had on Mr W. I have a great deal of sympathy for him being the victim of what was clearly a cruel and callous scam. But I can only compel Monzo to refund Mr W if it is responsible for the loss incurred. For the reasons explained, having carefully considered the circumstances of this complaint, I can see no basis on which I can fairly say that Monzo should be held liable for the loss Mr W has sadly suffered.*

***My provisional decision***

*My provisional decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.*

Stephen Wise  
**Ombudsman**