

## **The complaint**

Mr R complains that Barclays Bank UK PLC didn't do enough to protect him when he fell victim to a scam.

Mr R is represented in this matter, but for ease of reading I will refer to Mr R throughout this decision.

## **What happened**

The background to this complaint is well known to all parties, so I will not repeat it in detail here. In summary, Mr R says he was contacted on WhatsApp by individuals who said they represented a legitimate investment platform, offering high returns on cryptocurrency investing.

Mr R says the business appeared to be professional, with a convincing website. He says he was in regular contact with advisers who initially encouraged him to make small deposits. Mr R says he understood the investments he had made were performing very well and this led him to make larger investments. However, when he tried to withdraw his profits, the scammers became evasive and then ceased all contact.

In total Mr R says he has lost £22,085 to this scam. His Barclays account records show Mr R started making payments to a cryptocurrency exchange on 21 September 2024 and the last payment was made on 21 November 2024. In total Mr R made 18 payments to the exchange during this period. Mr R says the cryptocurrency was then transferred on to the scammers.

Mr R complained to Barclays as he felt it should have intervened by no later than the sixth payment he made, on 27 September 2024. He said if it had intervened it would have been able to identify that it was highly likely that he was falling victim to a cryptocurrency trading scam. And he said if it had intervened it could have prevented him from losing any more money to the scam.

Barclays did not uphold Mr R's complaint. It asked Mr R to provide evidence of the scam and that he had lost money to this scam. For whatever reason, Mr R did not provide anything to Barclays to show that he had been scammed.

Unhappy with Barclays' response, Mr R referred his complaint to this service.

An investigator looked into the complaint and didn't uphold it. They said they had not been provided with anything to show that Mr R had been the victim of a scam, for example details of the scam, cryptocurrency statements or evidence he had lost money.

Mr R then provided some limited evidence to this service to support his complaint.

The investigator reviewed the information. Having done so, they explained that to investigate this complaint properly and reach a view that is fair to both parties, this service requires evidence that a scam has taken place and that the complainant has lost money due to the scam. As Mr R had only provided a very limited amount of information the investigator said

this service did not have sufficient evidence to investigate the complaint properly.

Mr R did not accept our investigator's view and 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 have reached the same view as our investigator, and for much the same reasons. I'll explain why.

It's important to see evidence that a customer has been scammed and that, for example, it isn't a case of a failed investment. In this case Mr R has told this service he has been the victim of a cryptocurrency investment scam but hasn't been able to evidence how the scam unfolded. For example, he has not been able to provide evidence of the conversations he had with the people he alleges scammed him, evidence of the investments he made, or anything to show he has lost money.

It is not in dispute that Mr R made the payments to the cryptocurrency exchange, but I don't think this is enough to show that he has lost money to a scam. This is not to say I don't believe Mr R, but I do think it's reasonable for him to provide evidence to support his version of events about the circumstances of the scam and how it developed. In the absence of evidence to show that Mr R lost this money in a scam I can't say that it would be reasonable for Barclays to be held liable for any of the losses Mr R says he has suffered.

I'm sorry to hear of what's happened to Mr R and the impact it's had on him, and I understand why he feels the money should be refunded, but without evidence to show that Mr R has lost money to a scam I can't consider Barclays' actions with regard to the payments he made to the cryptocurrency exchange.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr R to accept or reject my decision before 4 February 2026.

Suzannah Stuart  
**Ombudsman**