

The complaint

A company I'll refer to as M complains that Revolut Ltd have declined to reimburse them for payments made to one of their accounts that were the result of a scam. They'd like the funds reimbursed.

What happened

Between November 2023 and January 2024 M sent three payments totalling £15,000 from their bank account to a Revolut account belonging to a firm who were carrying out some construction work. But there were significant issues with the work carried out, and it was not completed. M came to believe they had been defrauded and contacted Revolut to ask for reimbursement.

Revolut declined to reimburse M, saying they didn't believe it was a scam, and was more likely a dispute over the quality of work carried out.

M didn't agree with this and referred their complaint to our service. They argued that Revolut account holder had previously been convicted of defrauding people in similar circumstances and argued that Revolut shouldn't have opened the account. One of our investigators looked into what happened but didn't think Revolut needed to do anything further.

This wasn't accepted by M, so the complaint has now 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.

Here, Revolut have ultimately concluded that this was a civil dispute, rather than a scam by their customer. I've considered the information about the director of the firm they paid – the previous fraud conviction in similar circumstances, and that the police have investigated them again and passed a file to the Crown Prosecution Service. I accept it's possible that M has fallen victim to a scam here. But that isn't the key reasoning for the outcome in this case.

M doesn't have a direct relationship with Revolut, beyond sending funds to accounts held with them, that they now believe was part of a scam. Our service can consider complaints about the receiving account provider where someone alleges they were tricked into making a payment into the account.

But I can only reasonably suggest Revolut should refund M if I determine there were any acts or omissions by Revolut that could have reasonably prevented the loss, or there are other fairness reasons to do so. Having opened an account that is later used to fraudulently receive funds isn't enough for me to conclude that Revolut could have prevented M's loss. And here, even if I were to accept that the payments were part of a scam, I wouldn't say that Revolut ought reasonably to be liable for refunding M.

I should also note that because this complaint involves information about a third party, that I'm not able to share in detail with M. So, I apologise to M if there isn't as much detail as they would like, but I have described the evidence I've relied upon in reaching my outcome. I hope this provides assurance that I have considered all the evidence available to me when determining what I see as a fair and reasonable conclusion.

Account opening

I've considered Revolut's checks and considerations when opening the account. This was a business account, and I'm satisfied that they carried out checks to verify the identity of the account holder and did their due diligence before opening the account.

I've seen the identity documents provided, as well as the checks carried out on the named individual, as well as the limited company. And it seems likely the information supplied was genuine. I haven't seen anything in the application or identification documents provided, that they ought to have given Revolut concern that the account would be used to receive fraudulent funds.

I have considered M's point the director had a previous conviction for fraud – and had this been discovered I think this would likely have given Revolut pause. But I've also not seen anything to suggest that the director was disqualified from running a company. So, I'm not persuaded that no other financial firms would have allowed them to open an account. And I can see from the statements that it's likely the company also had access to accounts outside of Revolut. From a search I also believe the director was involved in other companies at the time as well.

Based on this, I'm not persuaded that Revolut choosing to open the account has directly led to the losses to M. The company and director had access to other accounts, so even if Revolut hadn't opened this one, it's likely M would have paid a different one.

Activity on the account

The account M paid was open for a few months at the time of the initial transaction in November 2023. But by this point there is a pattern of the account regularly receiving funds of similar values to the amounts M paid, from external sources. The payment details on each payment match, and the funds are reaching the intended beneficiary.

And being that this was opened as a business account, I don't see that the activity on the account is line with what you would expect to see. Reviewing the account history I'm not persuaded that there are any specific risks that ought reasonably to have prompted Revolut to take a closer look at the account activity. And even if they had asked their customer any questions about M's payments, they would have been able to supply the genuine invoice.

I've also not seen any evidence that there were any concerns about fraud or scams prior to any of M's payments, either internally from Revolut or from any external fraud reports. Ultimately, I'm not persuaded that there is anything in the account activity so risky or alarming that I would reasonably have expected the account to be blocked, or activity questioned. So, again I don't see that Revolut missed an opportunity to prevent any losses to M.

Reporting and recovery of funds

Here I understand that M's own bank didn't contact Revolut, as they believed it was a civil dispute rather than a scam. By the time M contacted Revolut directly I'm satisfied that any

funds they had sent had been utilised. So, I don't see that there were funds to recover for M at the time Revolut were made aware of the dispute.

Conclusion

I appreciate M feel very strongly that they have been defrauded. But even if I accept that to be the case, I haven't found any significant acts or omissions by Revolut that likely would have prevented any losses to them.

Overall, I'm not persuaded that Revolut have been unfair or unreasonable in how they've treated M. As such, I'm not asking them to do anything further.

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 M to accept or reject my decision before 23 March 2026.

Thom Bennett
Ombudsman