

The complaint

Ms N has complained that Revolut Ltd did little to solve her complaint after she was a victim of fraud.

What happened

In May 2020 Ms N received a couple of emails from Revolut asking her to authenticate herself for an Android device. As she didn't use android technology, Ms N ignored these emails. She quickly realised her access to her Revolut app and account was blocked.

£1,218 had been transferred from her account without her authorisation.

She complained to Revolut but found it difficult to get her problem resolved. She brought her complaint to the ombudsman service. A month after her account was blocked, Ms N was able to access her account. In early July 2020 the money was reimbursed to Ms N's account.

Ms N was unhappy that whilst she'd had the money reimbursed, Revolut hadn't reimbursed to Ms N's foreign currency and cryptocurrency pots. Revolut also gave Ms N £100 for the inconvenience caused and £24.83 to reflect the relevant interest for the time she was without her money.

Our investigator didn't think Revolut had done anything wrong. Ms N remained disappointed that she'd lost out on the ability to trade and earn money during the period she was without funds. She expected to be reimbursed for her losses.

Ms N's complaint was referred to an ombudsman for decision.

I completed a provisional decision on 1 July 2021. I felt there had been delays in Revolut sorting out Ms N's issues and giving her access to her account. This meant I was going to ask them to pay her additional compensation of £150.

Ms N responded by saying she felt £500 compensation would be fairer. She didn't see why she had to prove that she would definitely have undertaken transactions during the period she was locked out of her account.

No response has been received from Revolut.

I now have all I need to complete 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.

Having done so, I've reached the same conclusion as I did in my provisional decision. I'll explain why.

Firstly there's no dispute that Ms N's account was accessed without her authority. A transfer she'd not consented to was made to a named, but unknown, third party. Revolut was able to locate the funds and reimbursed Ms N, along with the requisite interest for the time she was without her funds.

As Revolut had identified a potential security breach on Ms N's account, they blocked access to it. This is line with what we'd expect to see from a bank managing security issues. However Ms N wasn't able to access her account for up to a month so I have considered whether that level of customer service is fair and reasonable.

To assist me in assessing this aspect, I've reviewed Ms N's account terms and conditions. I couldn't see any specific time period indicating when a customer would get access back to their app and account.

So I've reviewed what standards tend to be followed within the banking industry when banks block and take steps to protect customer accounts. A period of 10 days is not uncommon.

To be unable to access your account for a month is quite a considerable period. I've also reviewed the interaction between Ms N and Revolut through their online chat facility. There seems to have been a lack of urgency in how Revolut approached this issue.

Putting things right

Whilst it's not my role to tell Revolut how to manage their systems and processes, I can decide that the impact on individual customers – like Ms N – has not been fair and reasonable. Because of the time taken to resolve issues here, I believe this is the case in Ms N's case.

I think it's fair Revolut pay her an additional £150 for the inconvenience caused.

I know Ms N's main concern is that she was unable to use her funds to trade currencies and earn additional funds during the period she had no funds. I've seen no evidence that Ms N would have done this trading nor the profit she would have earned although I've considered the figures Ms N has provided to us showing the value of her holdings in January 2021.

I appreciate Ms N believes it's harsh to expect her to prove that she definitely would have traded during that period but what I'm considering is the actual impact on her and not potential gains. I don't think it would be fair and reasonable to add further to the compensation paid to Ms N.

My final decision

For the reasons I've given, my final decision is to instruct Revolut Ltd to pay Ms N an additional £150 for the inconvenience caused.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms N to accept or reject my decision before 31 August 2021.

Sandra Quinn
Ombudsman