

The complaint

Mr B complains Revolut Ltd refuses to refund him for transactions on his account he says he didn't make.

What happened

Mr B says there are 10 transactions on his account he doesn't recognise between 9 January 2024 and 31 January 2024. Mr B says he didn't make these transactions and he only noticed them when he logged into his account on 2 February 2024 to move some money around. Mr B says this lost money has put him in a very difficult financial position.

Revolut says it has no evidence of any unauthorised logins on Mr B's account or any suspicious activity. The transactions were made up of eight card payments which were authorised by a one-time password (OTP) sent to Mr B's usual phone number; and two transfers which were completed on the Revolut app from Mr B's trusted device. Revolut says it also spoke to Mr B via online chat before allowing the last payment to be sent, and during the chat Mr B confirmed that this was a payment he wanted to make.

Our investigator considered this complaint and decided not to uphold it. Mr B was unhappy with this outcome, so the complaint has been passed to me for 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.

My role is to look at all the evidence, and then reach a decision that takes this into account and is fair to both parties. That means I consider Revolut's position as much as I do Mr B's. And what Mr B's asking for here is for Revolut to use its own funds to pay him back money he says was spent from his account by someone else.

Our investigator considered all the evidence supplied by both parties and decided not to uphold this complaint. Mr B wasn't happy with this, but he hasn't raised any specific challenges to the initial outcome, nor has he provided any new evidence. So, I have considered the same evidence, testimonies, and relevant legislation (The PSR's), and I have decided not to uphold this complaint. I have been unable to identify a compromise of Mr B's Revolut account and on balance, it is more likely than not that the disputed transactions were authorised. I'll explain my reasoning below.

Mr B told us he has never shared his account details with anyone else. He says his phone was protected via a passcode and his Revolut account is protected with a different passcode. Mr B also told us he hasn't responded to any suspicious phone calls, emails or phone notifications which could've led him to fall victim of a scam. Mr B has told us that his Samsung phone broke, and he replaced this with a Motorola phone using the same SIM – so the same phone number.

Revolut have provided evidence to show all the transactions in dispute were completed on one of Mr B's two trusted devices. This means that the person making the payment had possession of Mr B's device, as well as his phone passcode and Revolut app passcode. But based on Mr B's evidence no one else knew these details and no one else has had access to his phone. So, the evidence suggests it's likely he made these payments himself.

Revolut has evidenced that the eight card transactions were authorised via an OTP which was sent to Mr B's usual phone number. I've also seen evidence that the first money transfer was flagged by Revolut as suspicious, and it was only authorised after a 'payment purpose review' was conducted. This involved Revolut discussing the payment over chat in the Revolut app to confirm this is a legitimate payment the customer wanted to make. I've read the chat record and I can see that Mr B said the payment was for investment purposes, and he was clear that he wanted the payment to go through. Again, for someone else to have made these transactions they would've had to access his phone and Revolut app, and then impersonated Mr B during the chat with Revolut to ensure the payment went through – which I think is unlikely.

There is no evidence that Mr B's phone or phone number were compromised during the period these transactions took place. The transactions are also not typical of fraud. Usually when a fraudster has gained access to someone's account, they make several transactions in quick succession in order to empty the account before being detected. But in Mr B's case the transactions took place over several days and the transactions never exceeded the account balance – suggesting the person making these transactions knew how much money was in the account. So, I think it's unlikely someone else was making these transactions on Mr B's account.

Overall, I am not persuaded these transactions were unauthorised. I appreciate this decision will be very upsetting for Mr B. It's a lot of money, and I understand he's currently in financial difficulty. So, I do have sympathy for his situation. However, based on the evidence, I think this is the only fair outcome for his complaint.

My final decision

I am not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 19 June 2024.

Sienna Mahboobani
Ombudsman