

## The complaint

Mr D complains Monzo Bank Ltd didn't do enough to protect him when he fell victim to a scam.

## What happened

Mr D opened an account with Monzo on 1 April 2022. Monzo became concerned about the activity on the account shortly after it was opened and ultimately closed the account.

In January 2023 Mr D complained to Monzo – with the help of a representative – saying that it hadn't done enough to protect him when he fell victim to more than one scam.

Monzo investigated Mr D's complaint and said that it wasn't going to refund any of the payments he'd made. Monzo said that was because one scam involved payments to a cryptocurrency account in his own name and the other was a scam in relation to which it had given warnings that he'd ignored. Mr D was unhappy with Monzo's response and so complained to our service.

One of our investigators looked into Mr D's complaint and said that Monzo had missed a number of opportunities to uncover the scams Mr D was falling victim to. In the circumstances our investigator recommended that Monzo refund losses of approximately £127,000. Mr D was happy with our investigator's recommendation. Monzo wasn't. But Monzo did offer to refund 50% of the payments Mr D had made towards the scams and offered to refund £61,465.00. Mr D wasn't happy with Monzo's offer, so his complaint was referred to an ombudsman for a decision and passed to me.

## 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.

Last month I issued a provisional decision. In that provisional decision I said:

*"I'm satisfied that Mr D opened his account with Monzo at the suggestion of a scammer who he was talking to, and that he opened a new account because the business who he'd been banking with for over 40 years had frozen his account because it was concerned Mr D was being scammed. I'm satisfied that this wasn't the first time that business – who I'll refer to as "L" throughout the rest of this decision – had had concerns that Mr D was being scammed, nor was it the first time that it had frozen his account. I say this because I'm satisfied that between 2020 and 2022 Mr D fell victim to at least four separate scams in which he appears to have lost over £400,000. I'm satisfied that L gave Mr D multiple warnings during this time that he was being scammed and invoked the Banking Protocol at least twice. Once on 5 July 2021 and once on 6 April 2022.*

*I agree with our investigator that the activity on Mr D's Monzo account was unusual from very early on. Monzo spotted this too – and ultimately decided to close his*

*account. No-one is disputing that this meant Monzo was in contact with Mr D throughout the time that he was being scammed. I also agree with our investigator that Monzo's interventions weren't as strong as they should have been. I am, however, satisfied that even if Monzo's interventions had been as strong as expected, Mr D would have carried on making the payments he did. Because if L didn't manage to break the spell, then I can't see how Monzo could have done so. I should add that other businesses have been involved too – and Mr D ignored their warnings too.*

*I appreciate that Mr D has lost a lot of money. I do hope going forwards that he's careful and recognises when businesses are trying to help. In the meantime, I consider the offer that Monzo has made is, if anything, generous. So, that's the award I'm minded to make."*

Both sides were invited to comment on my provisional decision. Mr D did – and accepted it. Monzo didn't reply.

### **Putting things right**

Having re-considered everything again, I remain of the view that Monzo's offer is fair.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that Monzo Bank Ltd's offer to refund 50% of the payments Mr D made from the third payment onwards – £61,465.00 according to Monzo Bank Ltd – along with 8% simple interest is fair and reasonable. So, that's the refund I'm going to require Monzo Bank Ltd to make

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr D to accept or reject my decision before 2 August 2024.

Nicolas Atkinson  
**Ombudsman**