

The complaint

Mrs W complains that Revolut Ltd (Revolut) is refusing to refund her the amount she lost as the result of a scam.

Mrs W is being represented by a third party. To keep things simple, I will refer to Mrs W throughout my decision.

What happened

The background of this complaint is well known to all parties, so I won't repeat what happened in detail.

In summary, Mrs W was looking for work when she was contacted via WhatsApp from what appeared to be a recruitment company about a remote working commission based part-time job. Mrs W confirmed she was interested in the role and was later contacted by a scam company I will call X.

X explained to Mrs W that she would have to complete 28 reviews of different movies which would increase the movies' popularity and ranking. Each time Mrs W completed a task she had to reset her balance (that showed a negative figure) by making a payment.

When Mrs W completed all the tasks, she attempted to make a withdrawal but was told she would have to make a further payment first. Mrs W tells us that this is when she realised, she had fallen victim to a scam.

Mrs W made the following payments in relation to the scam from her Revolut bank account:

Payment	Date	Payee	Payment Method	Amount
1	11 October 2023	Individual 1	Transfer	£2,440.21 + £70.45 fee
2	11 October 2023	Individual 1	Transfer	£370.77 + £12.24 fee
3	13 October 2023	Individual 1	Transfer	£2,466.00 + £56.72 fee
4	14 October 2023	Individual 1	Transfer	£700.00 + £16.10 fee

Our Investigator considered Mrs W's complaint and didn't think it should be upheld. Mrs W disagreed, so this complaint has 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.

It has not been disputed that Mrs W has fallen victim to a cruel scam. The evidence provided by both Mrs W and Revolut sets out what happened. What is in dispute is whether Revolut should refund the money Mrs W lost due to the scam.

Recovering the payments Mrs W made

Mrs W made payments into the scam via transfer. When payments are made by transfer Revolut has limited options available for it to seek recovery. Revolut has explained that it attempted to recover the payments Mrs W made but as they were made directly to a card no recovery was possible.

With the above in mind, I don't think Revolut had any reasonable options available to it to recover the payments Mrs W made.

Should Revolut have reasonably prevented the payments Mrs W made?

It has been accepted that Mrs W authorised the payments that were made from her account with Revolut, albeit on X's instruction. So, the starting point here is that Mrs W is responsible.

However, banks and other Payment Services Providers (PSPs) do have a duty to protect against the risk of financial loss due to fraud and/or to undertake due diligence on large transactions to guard against money laundering.

The question here is whether Revolut should have been aware of the scam and stepped into question Mrs W about the payments she was making. And if it had questioned Mrs W, would it have been able to prevent the scam taking place.

While I wouldn't necessarily have expected the payments to have triggered Revolut's fraud prevention systems it appears they did, and online conversations took place when payment 1 and payment 3 were made.

When Mrs W attempted to make payment 1 Revolut warned her that she was likely experiencing a scam and initially Mrs W decided not to make the payment and agreed for Revolut to cancel it. Yet just moments later she went ahead with the payment anyway.

Mrs W was also warned by Revolut when she made payment 3 about the risks involved when being guided to make payments by a third party but she continued anyway.

I have read the conversations Mrs W had with X when she was making the payments in dispute. It's clear Mrs W was aware that Revolut had fraud concerns and she told X about these. Mrs W then took X's guidance sending screenshots of the payment process to X and following X's guidance on making the payments.

With the information I have reviewed I think it's possible Revolut could have intervened further than it did but it's also clear that Mrs W was being guided by X when making the payments and was following X's guidance. So, I don't think any further intervention from Revolut would have prevented the payments and I don't think Revolut is responsible for Mrs W's loss.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs W to accept or reject my decision before 14 January 2025.

Terry Woodham
Ombudsman