

July 27, 2020

ATTN: Students/Academic Advisors

Executive Vice President (Education/Student Support)

WARNING: Fraud Being Perpetrated under the Identities of Academic Advisors

There have been reports of emails being sent to Tohoku University students (particularly international students) under the names of academic advisors, urgently requesting that students purchase gift cards etc. and email the codes.

If you receive such a request, do not respond. Instead, please contact your academic advisor or Office of Educational Affairs.

Sample Messages (Extract)

1st Message

***** <professoremail1@gmail.com>

Hello,

I need you to run a quick task for me. Please send me an email as soon as possible.

Regards,

Professor

2nd Message

Dear ++++++,

Thanks for your response. I need you to please purchase some gift cards for me. There are some prospects that I need to send these to but I haven't been able to get them myself as I am stuck in the hospital with a relative who's critically ill. Let me know if it's possible to get them for me right now so I can give you further details. I'll reimburse you.

Afterwards, 3rd and 4th messages are sent to provide detailed instructions to the fraud victim. The messages have the following characteristics.

1. The email is sent under the name of an academic advisor.
2. The sender's address contains the word "professor."
3. If the student responds to the message, the sender will begin using their first name in subsequent messages.
4. The sender will respond quickly and frequently in an attempt to build trust.
5. They will initially ask for amounts of money that are affordable for students.
6. The amount they request will increase.

Note: The messages will not specify individual names.

Inquiries

Education and Student Support Department

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