



UNIVERSITY  
OF WOLLONGONG  
AUSTRALIA

# Scam Safety for International Students

## Identify and avoid being scammed

# What is a scam?

Scams are a way of tricking you into stealing your money or your personal details.

Everyone is at risk of being scammed and all it takes is for you to be busy and not paying attention.

New scams appear all the time as the scammers take advantage of new technology, local events or information you post in the public domain.

# Types of scams

## Fake Authority demands

- A supposed government authority demands payment of a sum of money to avoid the risk of you being deported or having your visa cancelled
- Phishing emails/SMS messages, calls or social media post that contain a link for you to click on. These usually contain malicious software to steal your personal, financial and banking information.

## Rental

- These scams are designed to trick you into paying money for accommodation that doesn't exist or isn't available. With the current housing shortage, international students can be an easy target.

## Contract cheating

- Tutoring companies or assignment outsourcing companies make out they are official Higher Education organisations connected to the University. Should you outsource an assignment to such a service, you will most likely end up being blackmailed, risk having your identity stolen and will put yourself in breach of the [IT Acceptable Use Policy](#) and the [Student Conduct Rules](#).

## Ransomware

- Your device becomes infected and your data is encrypted until you pay a ransom of sorts.
- Payment demanded is often in the form of gift vouchers or BitCoin to decrypt your data.

## Blackmail

- This is a form of image based blackmail where you the scammer threatens to share intimate personal images of you online unless their demands are met.

## Virtual kidnapping

- You are forced to fake your own kidnapping, so your family pay a ransom
- You are told that unless you pay large amounts of money or cryptocurrency into offshore bank accounts otherwise you will be implicated in a crime and will be deported or arrested.

# Scammers...

**Often pretend to be from an official organisation:**



- Australian Immigration or a foreign government department or Visa agent
- Australian Police
- Australian Taxation Office (ATO)
- An Embassy, High Commission or Consulate
- The University
- The World Health organisation
- Real Estate or Rental agent

**May ask for money or information asking for:**



- Personal, bank or credit card details
- Money to be sent to a third party
- additional student fees or a fine
- a deposit
- additional money for your visa
- money for rent for someone other than the real estate agency or your landlord.

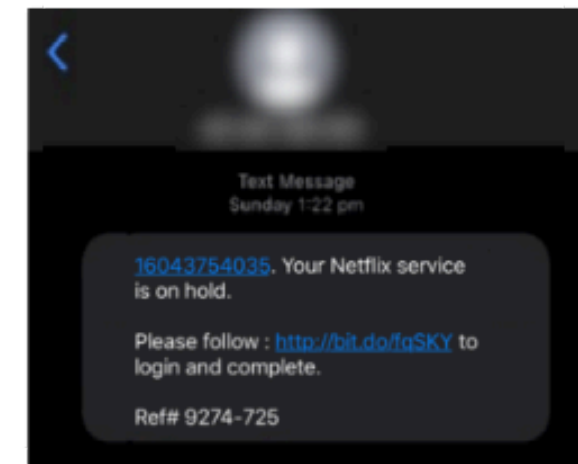
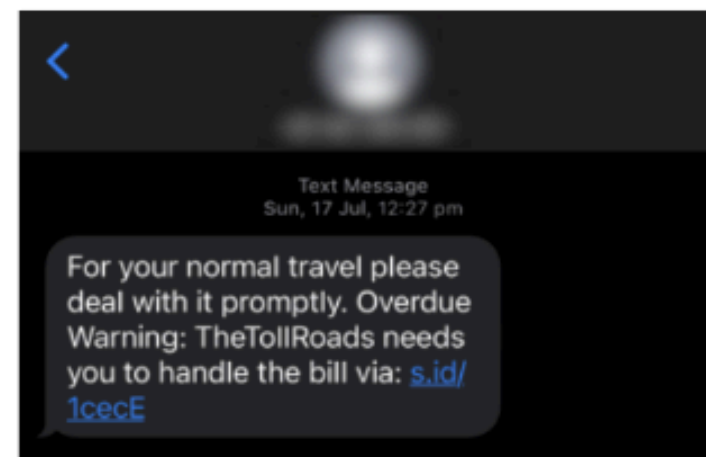
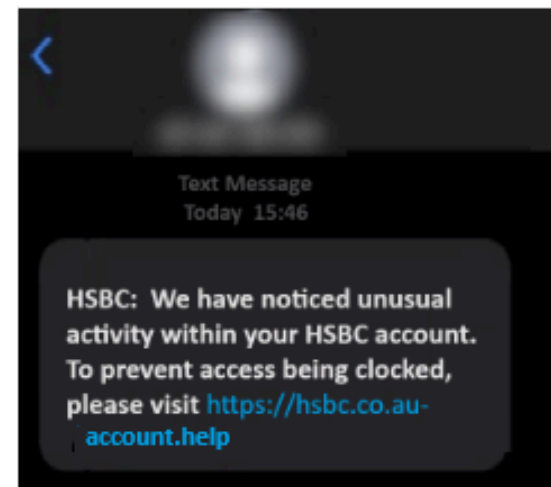
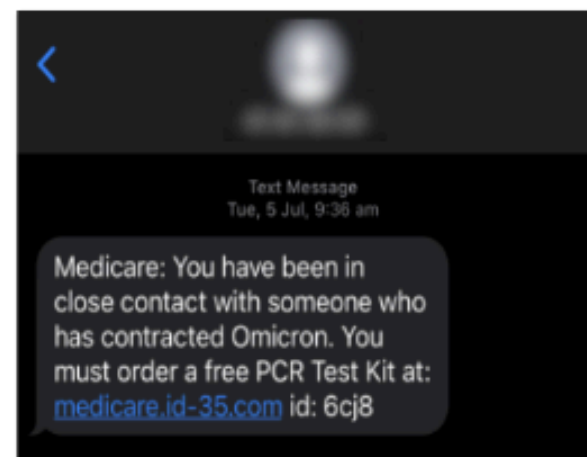
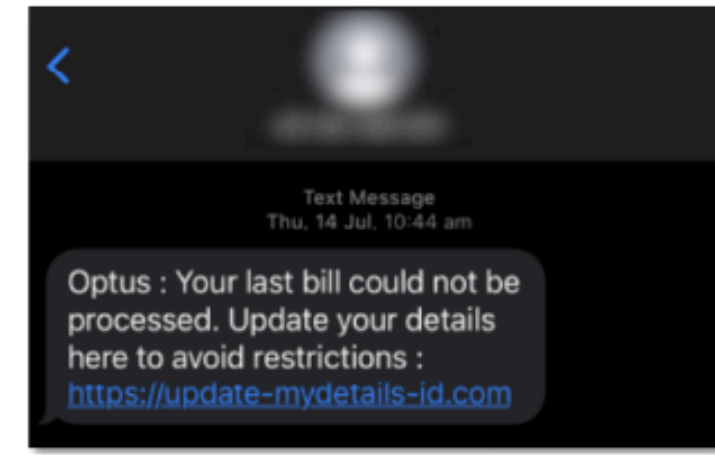
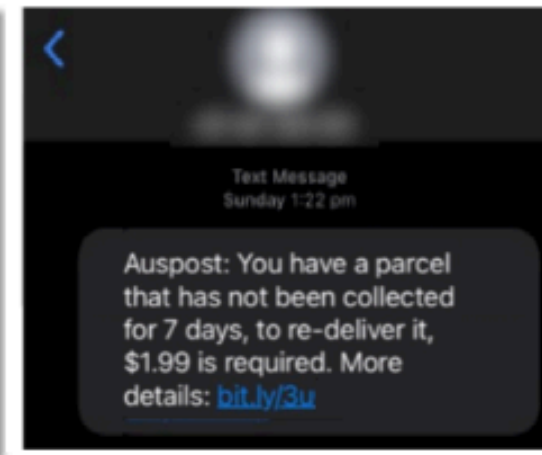
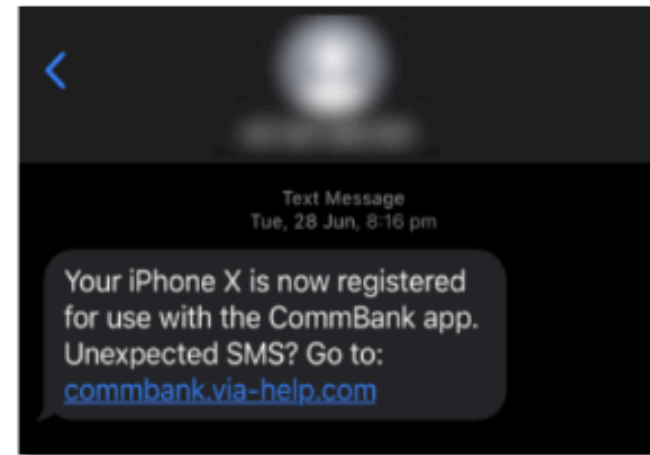
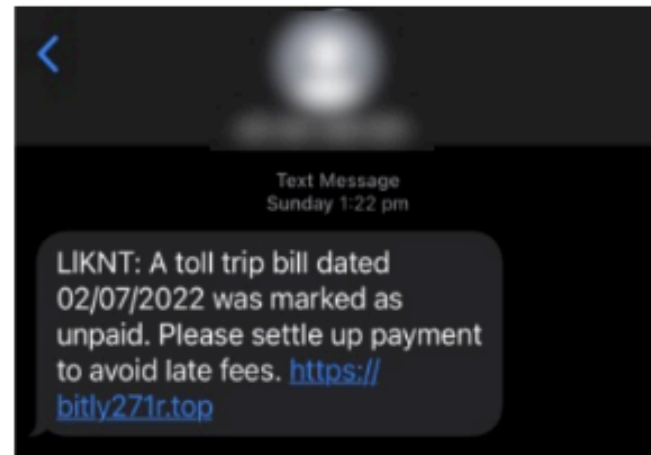
**May contain a threat that unless you pay them:**



- Your visa will be cancelled
- Your University place will be cancelled
- You will fail your course
- You will be deported
- You will be arrested
- You will lose your job
- You will be evicted
- Your family may be arrested

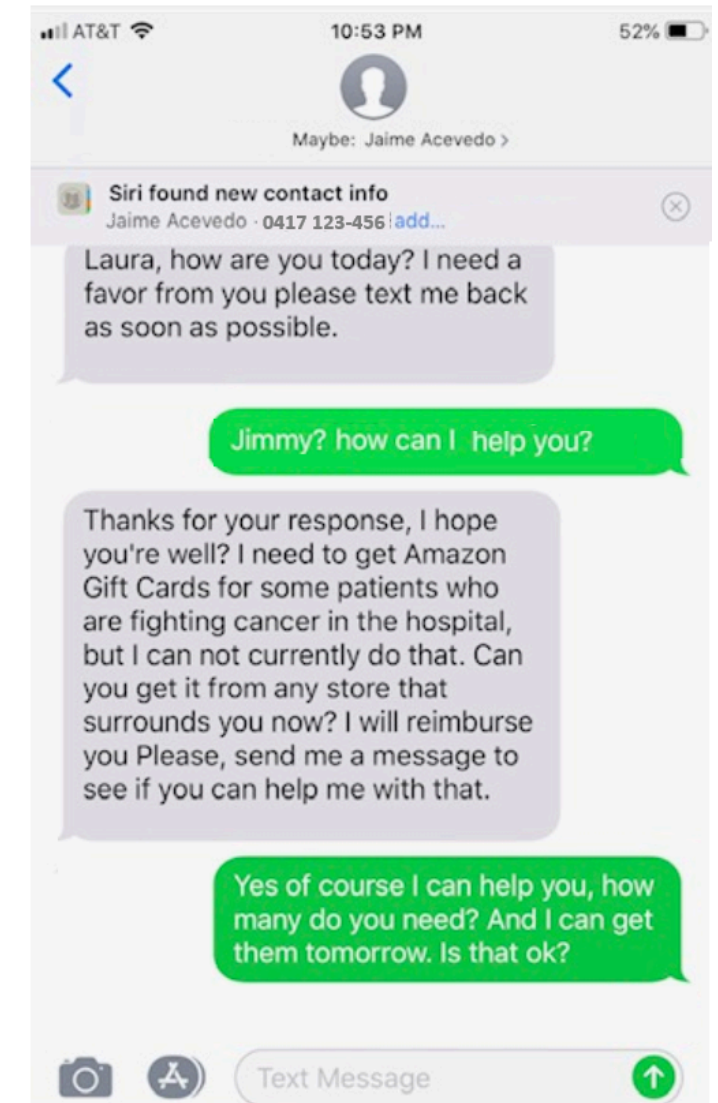
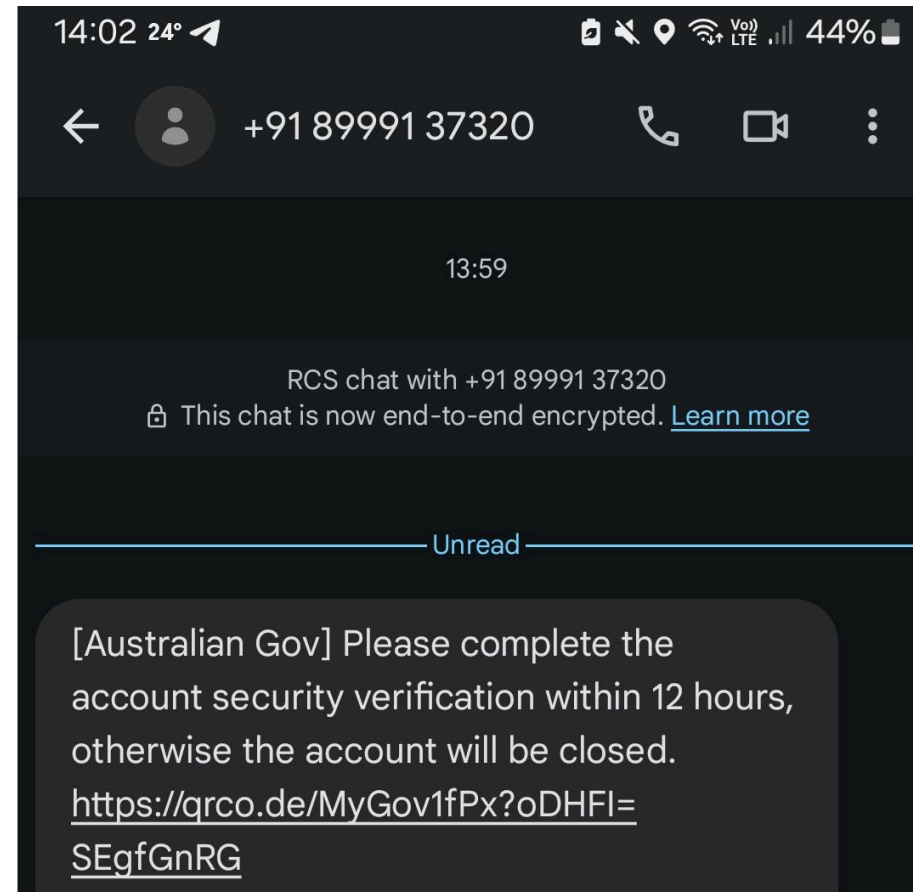
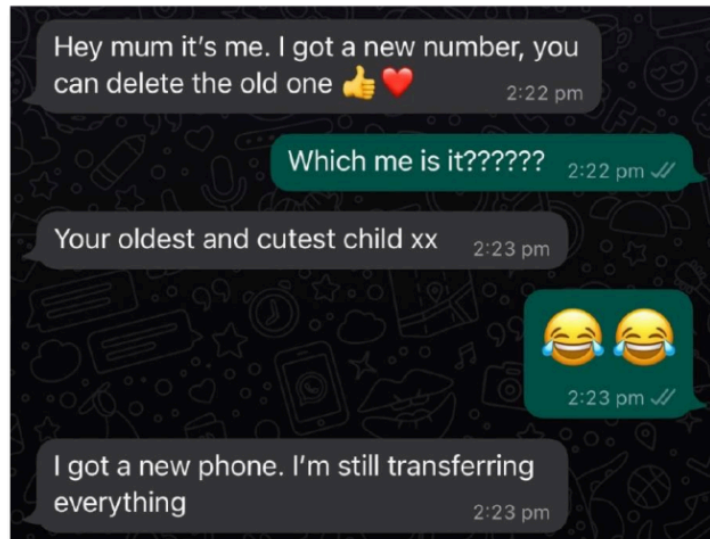
# Common SMS scams

Don't click on links in SMS messages. If in doubt, go to the legitimate website, look up their number and call them direct to check.



# Text message scams

If you know the person, check with them directly first by talking to them. If it's a company or an official department, look up the customer service number from their legitimate website and call them to check. Don't fall for buying Gift Cards or sending money.



# Text message scams

- Never give out personal information to someone you don't know.
- If you do know the person and they are asking for personal information (or money), talk to them directly to verify that it is them before you do anything.



**When it  
doesn't  
feel right...**

- **You don't recognise the number.**
- **You are not expecting the message.**
- **You don't know the person.**
- **You are being asked for money or information.**
- **It has a sense of urgency or a threat.**

# Where to get help

**You are not alone and don't need to be scared. There is plenty of support to help you.**

**Reporting a threat means we can also warn other students.**

**If you have been hacked, have had personal identification stolen or have experienced a threat and you need help and support, check out the options available to help you:**

**[Local Support Resources](#)**

## **Other support services:**

You also have access to a range of free and confidential support services including the [UOW 24-hour Student Wellbeing Support Line](#) and [free and confidential counselling](#) for students experiencing distress or anxiety.

# The Little Book of Scams

Translated copies of a the Little Black Book of Scams can be viewed and downloaded here:

- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Chinese simplified | 简体中文 \( PDF 6.5 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Arabic | العربية \( PDF 3.79 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Vietnamese | Tiếng Việt \( PDF 13.31 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Greek | Ελληνικά \( PDF 3.54 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Italian | Italiano \( PDF 6.24 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Hindi | हिन्दी \( PDF 3.63 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Spanish | Español \( PDF 6.24 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - German | Deutsch \( PDF 3.53 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Macedonian | македонски \( PDF 3.52 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Traditional Chinese | 繁體中文 \( PDF 6.51 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Tagalog/Filipino | Wikang Tagalog \( PDF 3.5 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Korean | 한국어 \( PDF 3.55 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Indonesian | Bahasa Indonesia \( PDF 3.51 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Farsi | فارسی \( PDF 6.03 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Turkish | Türkçe \( PDF 5.95 MB \)](#)
- [How to Spot and Avoid Scams - Dari | دری \( PDF 3.58 MB \)](#)



You can also view [How to spot and avoid scams](#) videos translated into 17 languages to help you spot and avoid scams on the ACCC YouTube playlist.