

From: [Dean of Students" Office](#)
To: allug-list@ust.hk; alpg-list@ust.hk
Cc: [Dean of Students" Office](#)
Subject: DSTO – Beware of telephone and flat-rental scams
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Dear Students,

Welcome back on campus! We hope you had a restful Winter break.

We write to remind all, particularly newcomers to Hong Kong, to stay alert towards various types of scams and frauds, which has become a major crime worldwide. While Hong Kong is generally a very safe city, we are not immune from scams and frauds:

There has been an increasing number of telephone / social media deception cases in Hong Kong involving scammers impersonating government officials, asking victims for fund transfers to prove their innocence, and cutting off their contacts with families by staying in local hotel, going to remote areas, or even travelling overseas. Please be reminded that government officials will not prohibit you from contacting your family or requesting money transfers.

We urge you to complete the [Anti-deception Online Learning Package](#) developed by the HKSAR Government's Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) if you have not already done so. The package acquaints users with tips in identifying common scams in Hong Kong. You are also encouraged to follow ADCC's social media accounts by scanning the QR codes at the end of the package to stay up to date with scammer's latest tricks. If you are in doubt, call ADCC hotline 18222 for immediate assistance.

Please also be reminded to engage with a licensed estate agent when renting a flat in Hong Kong. The Estate Agents Authority (EAA) regulates the operation of all local licensed agents for better protection of end-user's right (details [here](#)). If you need support for off-campus accommodation, please contact the DSTO Student Housing and Residential Life team (Off-Campus Housing Section) at offcamphouse@ust.hk.

Meanwhile, newcomers to Hong Kong are to be alerted that local laws against narcotics differ from those in other countries. Drugs such as cannabis and ecstasy, which are considered recreational drugs in some countries, are illegal in Hong Kong. Recently, the [trend of vaping etomidate](#) (aka "space oil") is a concern within the local community. Etomidate is classified as a Part 1 poison. We cautioned all students to stay away from drugs.

If you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at dst@ust.hk. Lastly, we have included additional resources below regarding scam prevention and anti-drug information for your reference.

We wish you a Happy Year of the Snake!

Best regards,
Dean of Students' Office

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [News clip about telephone scam](#)
- [New Student Orientation Website on Scam Prevention](#)
- [Latest Scam Alerts by the ADCC](#)
- [Licensed Agent List provided by the EAA](#)
- [New Student Orientation Website on Anti-drug](#)