

# Distribution Fraud – Fake University Orders



## Protect Alert

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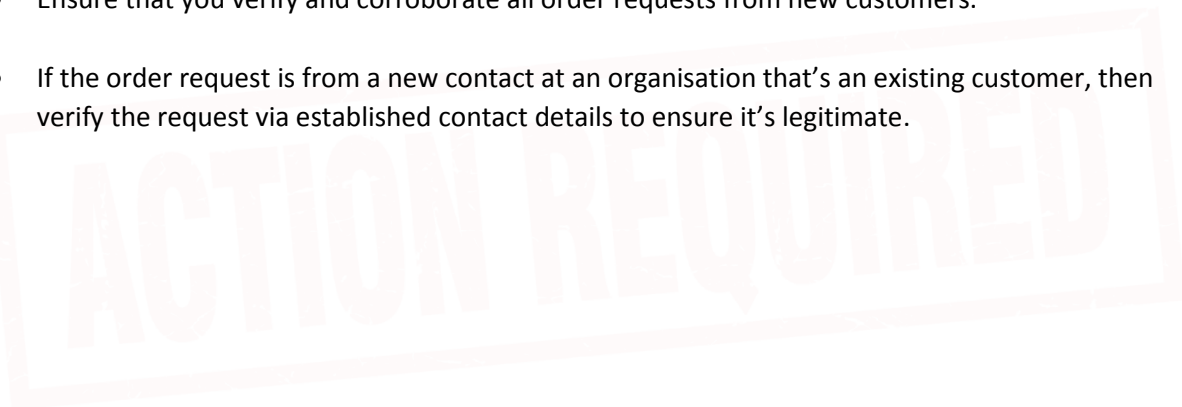
Fraudsters are imitating UK university email addresses to defraud UK and European supply companies. The fraudsters are registering domains that are, at first glance, similar to genuine university domains: xxxxacu-uk.org, xxxxuk-ac.org, xxxacu.co.uk. These domains are used to contact suppliers and order high value goods such as IT equipment and pharmaceutical chemicals in the name of the university. Fraudsters imitating one university's domain lead to a cumulative victim loss of over £350,000.

#### How the fraud works:

1. A supplier will receive an email purporting to be from a university requesting a quotation for goods on extended payment terms.
2. Once the quotation has been provided, a purchase order is emailed to the supplier that is similar to an authentic university purchase order.
3. The purchase order typically instructs delivery to an address. This address may or may not be affiliated with the University.
4. The items are received by the criminals before being moved on. No payment is received by the supplier.

## What you need to do

- Ensure that you verify and corroborate all order requests from new customers.
- If the order request is from a new contact at an organisation that's an existing customer, then verify the request via established contact details to ensure it's legitimate.



For more information about how to protect yourself online, visit  
[www.cyberaware.gov.uk](http://www.cyberaware.gov.uk) and [takefive-stopfraud.org.uk](http://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk)

Every Report Matters

If you have been a victim of fraud or cyber crime, report it to us at [Actionfraud.police.uk](mailto:Actionfraud.police.uk), or by calling 0300 123 2040.