

LESSON 9: ACTIVITY 1

Teacher Resource Sheet: Watch out for scams

What to look out for:

1. You're a winner: Scammers can contact you by phone, letter, text, email or online claiming you have won a large sum of money in a Lottery. They then ask you to log in or contact one of their agents to claim the prize. This is a scam, they will ask you to pay various processing and transfer fees in order to release the prize, but you'll never receive a penny.

2. PC scams: The scammer tries to gain access to the consumer's computer and installs malicious software to capture sensitive data, such as online banking details, or they may request money to fix the problem. They then say they can fix the problem for you if you give them your credit card details or remote access to your PC. They then use these personal details to steal your money. Always be suspicious of anyone making these requests. This is a phishing scam.

3. The work-at-home scam: "Work at home" adverts might sound great in theory, especially if you have recently been made unemployed, you can't work outside your home, or your situation has changed and you need more income. Some offers are straightforward and genuine enough but many of these schemes are scams. The adverts don't mention that you may have to work many hours without pay. Often there are hidden costs that you yourself will have to pay, such as money up front for materials, stamps, envelopes, photocopies or placing adverts - then you wait for weeks and hear nothing.

4. Emails from your bank: You get a legitimate looking email from your bank requesting information. The websites, phone numbers and emails are all fake. Your bank will never ask you for your personal details in this way. Do not reply.

5. Free trial: The real cost of the trial offer is hidden in the terms and conditions which usually states that once the trial is concluded you'll be charged full purchase price of the product. It also allows the company to send further monthly packages with very high charges. Consumers should check T&C and contact their bank to request no further transaction from this company be processed.