

TINDER AND GET SAFE ONLINE LAUNCH FRESHERS' WEEK SOS TO HELP STUDENTS SPOT SCAMS

Tinder is joining forces with Get Safe Online and campaigner Georgia Steel to help arm students with scam-smart tools

New UK research reveals 49% of young people aged 18-24 years old who are students or graduates have fallen victim to scams, with students losing an average of £2,228 per scam in the past year



LONDON, 16 September 2025 - Young people heading to university are being targeted by online scammers, with Freshers' Week marking one of the riskiest times of year for this group. To help students feel confident meeting new people as they start the new term, Tinder is joining forces with **Get Safe Online** and campaigner **Georgia Steel** to share tools that will help them stay scam-smart online.

New Tinder research reveals that 49% of students and graduates have already fallen victim to a scam, with almost half (44%) admitting they've shared personal details such as bank information, university address or their phone number with someone online before meeting in person.

Freshers' Week: News Faces, New Connections, New Risks

Whether it's buying gig tickets online, meeting new people on social media, or connecting on a dating app, scammers target people during their university years in a number of ways. New research from Tinder reveals over a third of students and graduates (38%) say they trusted new people quickly, and 32% admit to letting their guard down in their first year.

When it comes to dating, nearly a quarter (23%) of those surveyed between 18-24 years old admitted they've overlooked a red flag "for the plot", and simply because they fancied them too much to care (41%). In fact, 65% admit they've ignored warning signs in the past simply because they wanted to have fun. Meanwhile, 69% are eager to meet new people, 65% want to live in the moment, and 39% are actively seeking new romantic connections when starting university. However, the pressure to make the most of university remains, with 50% of this group of respondents feeling they need to chase experiences while they can, even if that means dating someone they're unsure about.

Campaigner and Love Island star, Georgia Steel - who was a victim of a romance scam herself in 2019 - has penned five tips with Tinder and Get Safe Online to help young people date smarter and safer as they embark on a new chapter this September.

Tips for spotting online romance scams - P.A.U.S.E:

- **P - Pay nothing** - No matter how sad their story is, never send money. Ever.
- **A - Avoid pressure** - Scammers rush emotions. Real connections take time.
- **U - Unmask inconsistencies** - Conflicting stories or weird grammar? Could be copy-paste lies.
- **S - Screenshot and report** - Suspicious behaviour? Capture it, then report directly in-app.
- **E - Escalate offline slowly** - Only meet up when you're 100% confident they're legit - and always in public.

To assist students in spotting the signs of a romance scam, Tinder is putting the tips in the palms of their hands by unveiling an in-app Swipe Card in the UK this September. It will share simple, practical tips to help students date more confidently and safely during Freshers' Week.

Commenting on the importance of awareness for romance scams, **Georgia Steel** said: *"This campaign is perfect for Freshers' Week because when you're new to things, it's easy to let your guard down. My advice? Have fun, but stay scam-smart. Use Tinder's safety features, listen to your gut, and don't be afraid to ask questions. I wish I'd had this support sooner."*

Harder to Spot, Bigger Consequences

Tinder's research also shows scams are becoming harder to spot, with nearly two-thirds (63%)^f of those surveyed saying romance scams now sound more convincing than ever. Despite this, half (51%) insist they wouldn't fall for a scam, with 70%¹ saying they're confident they could spot a scam.

As the line between flirting and fraud blurs, young people are increasingly vulnerable, with data from the City of London Police revealing that among 18-24 year olds who reported being defrauded, the average loss was £2,228 per scam, with young men aged 18–24 making up 64% of victims - double the rate of young women (32%)

"Fraud isn't confined to one corner of the internet – it spans social platforms, marketplaces, and dating apps alike. The rise of sophisticated social engineering tactics means scams are getting harder than ever to spot," said Tony Neate, CEO of Get Safe Online. "If something feels off, stop and check with a friend or family member, or by using tools on the Get Safe Online Self-Help Tool Centre before continuing."

Shame Keeps Victims Quiet

But it's not just about the money, Tinder's survey data reveals that of those who had been scammed, a third (31%) said they didn't speak out because they felt ashamed, while 38% said they didn't know how to report it. Meanwhile, 34% said they wish they'd spoken to someone sooner, but simply didn't know who to turn to for support.

Tinder already offers multiple tools to help students date with confidence:

- **Photo and ID Verification:** Verified photos show a blue tick to help users better assess the authenticity of their match.
- **Share my Date:** Lets users send a link with key details (time, location, profile photo) to friends or flatmates before a date
- **Are you Sure?** and **Does this Bother you?:** In-app warnings prompt users to pause and rethink before sending or replying to messages that raise red flags

"We know scams are happening all over the internet, but we want students to feel confident exploring the dating world, knowing they've got the tools and techniques to help them stay in control," said Sinead Purcell, Senior Communications Director at Tinder. "Freshers' Week should be all about meeting new people and having fun, but it's still important to keep an eye out for anything that doesn't feel quite right too, and trust your instincts."

END

NOTES TO EDITOR

- 1 - Research carried out by Censuswide between 20th August, 2025 to 31st August 2025 of 2,000 singles in the UK, aged 18-34 who went to university or are at university now
- 2 - Data from the City of London Police, based on data collected between 2024 and 2025 for age group 18-24 years olds

Detective Superintendent Oliver Little at the City of London Police, the National Lead Force for fraud, said:

"Romance fraud isn't just about stolen money - it's about stolen trust. For many students, freshers week marks a new chapter filled with excitement and possibility, but it also brings heightened vulnerability. Criminals know this and exploit it, often using charm and emotional manipulation to deceive victims.

"Sadly, stigma still surrounds those who become a victim of romance fraud, especially younger victims, who may feel pressure to 'brush it off' or stay silent. Being targeted by a romance fraud doesn't mean you're naïve - it means a manipulative criminal saw an opportunity and took it.

"We want students to understand that anyone can be affected by romance scams, regardless of age, gender, or experience. If something doesn't feel right, take a moment to pause. Avoid sharing personal details too quickly and never feel pressured to send money or make purchases for someone you've recently met."

ABOUT TINDER

Launched in 2012, Tinder revolutionised how people meet, growing from 1 match to one billion matches in just two years. This rapid growth demonstrates its ability to fulfil a fundamental human need: real connection. Today, the app has been downloaded over 630 million times, leading to over 100 billion matches, serving approximately 50 million users per month in 190 countries and 45+ languages - a scale unmatched by any other app in the category. In 2024, Tinder won four Effie Awards for its first-ever global brand campaign, "It Starts with a Swipe™".

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ABOUT GET SAFE ONLINE

Get Safe Online is an authoritative and widely respected resource designed to help individuals and small businesses stay safe, secure and confident when using the internet. The information and advice provided is designed to be impartial, practical and easy to follow by all of its target audiences. Get Safe Online was established in 2006 and is a not-for-profit organisation. www.getsafeonline.org

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