

Safety/Security Guide

As a new student, you are probably looking forward to the start of your university career, but may be feeling a little overwhelmed by the prospect of (perhaps for the first time) living on your own, working part time, and participating in various extracurricular activities. This guide describes a number of issues related to the start of student life that both new students and their parents/guardians need to be aware of. Please read it carefully.



Recruitment Practices

Following the Entrance Ceremony, some students autonomously hold recruitment events on campus for their extracurricular organizations (circles, clubs, etc.). However, non-university groups whose affiliation and activities are unclear, or groups that conduct antisocial activities, sometimes take this opportunity to enter campus without permission and conduct recruitment under false pretenses. Every year we receive numerous inquiries and requests for advice regarding these.

The university is home to both student organizations that are officially registered with the university (such as circles and clubs) and voluntary, unregistered student groups. The registered organizations receive support from the university and are affiliated with the Gakuyu-kai (Students' Friendship Association), which is organized and operated by students and university staff. The voluntary student groups are mostly involved in legitimate student activities, but a few of them are known to have connections with antisocial or extremist organizations, or do not disclose the true agenda of their activities when recruiting.

► Be cautious of organizations that do not disclose their affiliation/objectives (deceptive recruitment)!

In the past, organizations practicing deceptive recruitment at the university mainly targeted new students from March onward —around the time when the successful applicants were announced. In many of the reported instances, they attempted to recruit members by falsely claiming to represent extracurricular groups that conduct surveys, dinner parties, study groups, or volunteer work. Such organizations have also included cults, as reported by the mass media. Recently, increased vigilance is necessary as such groups now recruit year-round, not just at the beginning of the terms, both on and off campus via social media sites and door-to-door visits to student residences.

When/where you may be approached	Be cautious if anyone asks any of the following
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● While preparing for university: looking for housing at the University Co-op, Entrance Ceremony, etc. ● Club/circle recruitment season ● Door-to-door at apartment buildings ● Campus cafeterias, benches, empty classrooms ● Movie rental shops, supermarkets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please fill out a questionnaire. ● Are you satisfied with your student life? ● Please come to my dinner party/study group. ● Do you ever think about the meaning of life? ● Do you want to go to a concert? ● Would you like to participate in a volunteer activity? ● Do you want to play sports (soccer etc.) with us? ● Where is the nearest convenience store (bookstore/drug store etc.)?

How to detect deceptive recruiting

- 1 Recruiters often approach people who are alone.**
- 2 They may act overly friendly or eager to please.**
- 3 They are not always students.**
(Some are older adults or expelled students.)
- 4 They will often try to take you off campus for their activities.**
(They are sometimes based in apartments etc. near campus.)
- 5 They will not immediately disclose their organization's agenda.**
(They will try to build a relationship with you before revealing their affiliation.)



► Beware of invitations from the Students' Self-Governing Association, Sakyo, and other non-Gakuyu-kai groups!

The Students' Self-Governing Association is closely connected to another non-university organization (the Chukakuha —Japan Revolutionary Communist League National Committee). The majority of its members are NOT Tohoku University students. It often calls on its members to participate in demonstrations, gatherings, petitions, and strikes related to social issues such as anti-war, anti-nuclear, labor, or political activism. Those who become deeply involved in this group tend to neglect their studies and are unable to graduate on time. This is because students are pressured to carry out activities with the non-student members, such as distributing leaflets, broadcasting over PA equipment, conducting petitions, holding so-called elections, recruiting students from other universities, and entering campus facilities and classrooms without permission. Please be careful of this group.



Do NOT pay fees to the Students' Self-Governing Association!

The Students' Self-Governing Association sometimes tries to collect fees from non-member students, claiming that such fees are a requirement of attending university. THERE IS NO SUCH REQUIREMENT.

The group known as Sakyo (Cultural Circle Steering Committee) presents itself as an official extracurricular organization, but like the Students' Self-Governing Association it is composed of both non-university members and students. Some of the following organizations, which are not properly registered and whose real activities are unclear, may be fronts for Sakyo. They sometimes illegally occupy club rooms. This has happened at Tohoku University on several occasions. The occupiers did not respond to the Gakuyu-kai's requests that they leave, instead conducting protests against the university.

The following are NOT official university organizations

- The Student Support Committee
- Buraku Liberation League
- Cultural Circle Steering Committee
- Fujin Mondai Kenkyukai
- Undobu Kaigi
- Hangenpatsu Kodoinkai
- Shakai Shiso Kenkyukai
- Kawauchi Ryo Mondai wo Kangaeru Kai
- Gendai Shiso Kenkyukai
- Kindaishi Zemi
- Haboho Kenkyukai
- Circle Rin
- Buraku Kaiho Kenkyukai
- Spaghetti Club
- Chosenshi Kenkyukai
- Green Club
- Shakai Kagaku Kenkyukai
- Kawauchi Shikyoku
- Asia Kenkyukai

► If you are approached...

- In addition to verifying the organization's real name and activities, research them online before joining.

Explanations of organizations that belong to the Gakuyu-kai can be found in the Student Life Guide distributed at the undergraduate orientation and online. (Go to the Tohoku University website, select "Campus Life," then click on "Clubs & Circles")

- Do not readily give out personal information (address, phone number, email, SNS contact information etc.).
- Firmly refuse offers from any group whose identity or objectives are unclear to you.



University policy

- Tohoku University forbids organized activities by non-university groups on campus.
- Deceptive recruitment is unacceptable, no matter where it is conducted.
- However, the university does not forbid or restrict the students' individual freedom of thought or religion.

Participate in Extracurricular Activities Considerately and Responsibly!



Naturally, violating the law will result in harsh social and legal sanctions, as well as separate disciplinary actions as per university regulations (expulsion, suspension, or an official reprimand).

Committing a crime will result in the end of your university career, and possibly your professional career. As members of the local community and students of Tohoku University, please have consideration for others (respect their rights), observe Japan's laws, use common sense, and act responsibly.

If this is your first time in Japan, please be aware that Japanese social norms and laws are probably very different from those of your home country.

► The following will not be tolerated

- Sexual assault, including non-consensual photography, molestation, indecency with minors, stalking etc.
- Theft, assault etc. ■ Online bullying/libel
- Possession/use of drugs, such as marijuana, amphetamines, and "loophole drugs"
- Violating traffic laws while operating bicycles, motorcycles, etc.
- Giving alcohol to minors, pressuring others to drink (alcohol harassment)
- Any other behavior that violates Japan's laws or social norms
- Violations of community standards, such as making excessive noise, improper garbage disposal



► The drinking/smoking age is 20 in Japan!

Students may be under the impression that they are free to drink and smoke. **However, under Japanese law minors (persons under the age of 20) are not allowed to drink alcohol or use tobacco products. If you are a minor, please do not drink or smoke under any circumstances.**



Alcohol

Every year, problems and accidents involving alcohol consumption by university students are reported by the mass media nationwide. In the past Tohoku University students have been hospitalized due to alcohol poisoning caused by excessive drinking. An entire student organization was suspended when it was learned that minors had been encouraged to drink at its welcome party.

Alcohol can severely impair your judgment, leading you to do things you would never do normally. Drinking by minors can lead to serious problems and accidents. To ensure a productive student life, please refrain from drinking alcohol, even if you are pressured to do so.

Smoking

Smoking (including vaping/electronic cigarettes) is prohibited on all Tohoku University campuses. Of course, minors are prohibited by law from smoking, but even students who are of legal age cannot smoke on campus.

Some people start smoking out of curiosity, boredom, or because of peer pressure. However, if you are thinking of taking up smoking after you turn 20, we ask that you consider its addictiveness and impact on your health.

Sendai City Ordinances



Sendai bicycle safety bylaws

These bylaws created the following six obligations/guidelines for cyclists when riding within the city. In particular, they make it mandatory for bicycle users to enroll in cyclist liability insurance.

- 1 Cyclists must follow the Road Traffic Law and all related regulations.
- 2 Cyclists are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with bicycle safety information.
- 3 Cyclists must not endanger pedestrians or other cyclists.
- 4 Cyclists are strongly encouraged to wear helmets.
- 5 Cyclists are strongly encouraged to have their bicycles routinely inspected and maintained.
- 6 **Compulsory enrollment in cyclist liability insurance**

This insurance is partially covered under the Personal Accident Insurance (Gakkensai) and Supplementary Personal Liability Insurance for Students (Gakkenbai) that all students (excluding international students) are required to join. However, this coverage is very limited. Therefore, if you plan to use a bicycle in the city, we ask that you enroll in cyclist liability insurance to cover you in the event that you become liable for damages.

Examples of cyclist liability insurance

- TS Mark, provided by a bicycle shop
- Cyclist insurance provided through an insurance company
- Comprehensive Personal Liability and Accident Insurance for Students (Gakkensai Futaigakuso)
- Personal Liability Insurance for Students provided by the University Co-op

Please check the details of your existing insurance before enrolling in cyclist insurance. You may already be covered under the personal liability provisions of your or your family's vehicle or fire insurance plan.

International students are covered under the generally required Gakkensai and Inbound Futaigakusou (Comprehensive Personal Liability and Accident Insurance for Students) policies, so please be sure to enroll in these.

Ordinance forbidding aggressive soliciting in downtown Sendai

This ordinance forbids shop touts, soliciting, waiting outside for customers, and loitering with the intent to solicit in designated zones of the city.

First-time violators of this ordinance are issued a warning. The second time, an injunction will be issued. For the third offense, the violator will be fined up to JPY 50,000, and their name and address may be reported. A Tohoku University student was actually reported for violating this ordinance, and was disciplined by the university.

When performing part-time work, make sure you understand your duties and do not perform any work that violates city ordinances or Japanese law.



Counseling & Advice

At the beginning of the school year, many incoming students face large changes of environment as they transition to university education and begin living in an unfamiliar place. Adjusting to a new life can be physically and mentally exhausting. This can lead to stress, which is a further burden on both the mind and body. Please do not hesitate to schedule counseling if you find yourself too tired to attend classes for multiple consecutive days, or if during the course of everyday university life you have problems, concerns, or anxieties.

Student Health Care Center ☎ **022-795-7829**

Student Counseling/Special Support Center

University Counseling Center | Disability Services Office
☎ **022-795-7833** | ☎ **022-795-7696**

- Academic, career, or interpersonal concerns/anxieties
- Stress, mental/physical health
- Concerns/problems related to studies/student life

Student Services Division
☎ **022-795-7818**

- Reporting suspicious recruitment
- Counseling for/reporting of student life problems