Media Statement

Unisa Welcomes Court Ruling in Matter Against Doctor Che Lenyehelo

Approved for public release
Monday, 16 November 2026

The University of South Africa (Unisa) welcomes the judgment delivered by the High Court of South Africa, Gauteng Division, Pretoria, on 11 November 2026 in the matter of University of South Africa v Doctor Che Lenyehelo.

The High Court granted an interim order against Lehenyelo, effectively interdicting and restraining him from publishing, republishing, distributing or causing to be distributed the videos in which he is making spurious and defamatory remarks about Unisa and its law graduates.

The court further ordered him to remove the video from all social media platforms under his control within 24 hours of him being served with the order; as well as interdicted him from publishing further content substantially similar to the content in the video concerned.

He was also ordered to pay the costs of the application, including the costs of two counsel.

Unisa believes that the ruling reaffirms the principle that institutions and individuals are entitled to protection against unlawful conduct that damages reputation, undermines governance processes or seeks to erode public trust in established institutions.

It views the judgment as an important affirmation of the university's commitment to protecting its integrity, reputation and mandate as Africa's leading open distance e-learning institution. The university remains committed to transparency, accountability and lawful engagement, but will not tolerate conduct aimed at defaming, destabilising or destroying the institutional brand.

“The judgment sends a clear message that freedom of expression cannot be used as a shield for unlawful conduct, reputational harm or actions intended to undermine the governance and standing of the institution. Unisa will continue to defend its name, reputation, employees and stakeholders through every lawful avenue available’ said Unisa Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Puleng LenkaBula.

Unisa wishes to emphasise that this ruling demonstrates that attempts to defame the university or damage its brand carry consequences. The institution will not hesitate to take firm and decisive legal action against any individual or group that seeks to spread falsehoods, engage in unlawful reputational attacks, or deliberately undermine the university and its leadership.

The university remains focused on its core mission of teaching, learning, research, innovation

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and engaged scholarship, and will continue to protect the interests of its students, employees, alumni and the broader university epistemic community.

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