



Protection of Students Personal Information and Academic Integrity

March 2025

Dear
Students

The Protection of Personal Information Act no. 4 of 2013 is one of the many South Africa's legislation that the University of South Africa (UNISA) upholds. UNISA is committed to maintain the academic integrity and ensuring the security of our students' personal and academic information. The institution is continuously enhancing measures to strengthen the protection of personal information and contend with academic fraud.

The right to privacy is a fundamental part of South African law and as UNISA the privacy of our students is our top priority. To indicate our commitment to students' privacy we have put control measures in place to strengthen the security of personal and academic data. The measures include, amongst others:

- Continuously reminds students that any communication with the university should be done through their MyLife email addresses as emails received from personal email addresses will not be responded to.
- Enabling the multi-factor authentication (MFA) to verify students and reduce the number of hacked and compromised student user accounts and encryption of some documents containing student information .
- We are providing secure communication channels and encourage students to use the UNISA official platforms to prevent unauthorised access to personal information .
- ICT is providing awareness campaigns to alert and training students to help them recognise and avoid online scams targeting academic credentials .
- Provide awareness that UNISA does not use Telegram as a form of tutorials or communication with the students

The university has the responsibility to protect students and preserve the credibility of our qualifications and has done so by introducing the following measures:

Implementing secure online proctoring tools and verification processes to ensure the integrity of online assessments

Strengthening the AI-powered software to detect and prevent plagiarism in assignments and research submissions.

Increased enforcement of academic dishonesty policies, including penalties for contract cheating, impersonation, and unauthorized collaboration.

As a valuable member of the University of South Africa (UNISA) community, you are encouraged to:

- Be cautious when sharing personal information of other students and don't share without their consent.
- Avoid sharing sensitive information such as e.g. ID number, financial details, address, through unsecured channels.
- Refrain from using Telegram as a learning source or other unauthorized third-party platforms for academic purposes, as these may promote academic dishonesty and contain unverified or misleading information.
- Stay informed about cybersecurity best practices to protect your student account.

Students' role is maintaining data protection and academic integrity

- Report any suspicious activities related to data breached and academic fraud
- Participate and complete the Academic Integrity Course which is compulsory for all students.
- Refrain from completing assessments on behalf of another student, copying the work of another student during an assessment, or allowing another student to copy your work.
- Using social media (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram) or other platforms to disseminate assessment information.
- Refrain from purchasing completed answers from so-called "tutors" or internet sites which constitutes contract cheating and academic dishonesty.

Students' role is maintaining data protection and academic integrity



Conclusion

UNISA strive to protect students' personal information as guided by the POPIA Act and having students play their role by being responsible in protecting their data and that of the university can assist to ensure that UNISA remains compliant with POPIA.

Directorate: Privacy and Records Governance

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