

## First-year experience at Unisa

### Welcome to your first year at Unisa

Studying through Unisa is a bit like taking a long journey. It takes careful planning in terms of the strategies, resources and support you will need to be a successful Unisa student, for example:

- creating and connecting with your learning network
- planning your studies, discovering how to learn more effectively, using your time effectively and preparing for assessment (assignments and examinations)
- coping with challenges and finding out about Unisa's support services
- exploring your career development and preparing for opportunities

We'd like to partner with you during your first-year experience as a Unisa student. The first-year experience programme at Unisa aims to enhance student success and retention during the first year of study at Unisa. We would like to help you to stay focused and motivated, and to support you when you feel overwhelmed.

We will, therefore, be sending you regular e-mails to remind you of some of the things you could do to help you succeed as a Unisa student. These e-mails will contain important information and some activities to help you on your Unisa journey. We encourage you to do these activities to help you grow academically, personally and professionally.

**Our focus this week is on preparing for study success.**

#### Activity 1: Do you have everything you need to get started with your studies?

- Confirm that you have received all your study material (use the inventory letter to guide you). You can also access your study material via myUnisa.
- Check which [prescribed textbooks](#) you need to buy (this information will be in Tutorial Letter 101 for each of your modules).
- Make sure that you have access to a computer (or other device such as a tablet) and the internet (or think about who you need to negotiate with to get this). [Click here](#) for more information on how to get access to a computer and the internet at a Digital Access Centres. You can also get free access to computers and the internet at Unisa's regional offices once the institution is opened to the students.

#### Activity 2: Are you committed to your studies?

You've already made the decision to study! But have you considered the challenges you will face or the sacrifices you may need to make to be successful in your studies and your career? We encourage you to write a letter to yourself to capture how you will commit to the study journey and what you need to put in place to focus on your studies. [Click here](#) for some questions you may want to use to help you affirm your commitment to your studies.

#### Activity 3: Have you created space in your life to be a distance learning student?

This involves making time for your studies, creating your study space and negotiating support. Use [these guidelines](#) to ensure that you have negotiated the necessary time, space and support for your Unisa studies.

To contact the university, [click here](#).

**From the Student Retention Unit...all the best for your studies this week!**