

Negotiate the support you need

Your study success depends to a large extent on your effort and what you put into your studies. You have probably realised by now that you also need other people and resources to help you succeed with your studies. Negotiating support is a special skill and it starts with you identifying what support you need.

Our focus this week is on helping you to identify and negotiate the support you need.

Activity 1: Identify the support you need

You will need the people in your life to understand the demands of being a distance learning student. **You will require a specific space to study and study time free from interruptions.** Our experience is that it is helpful to be specific when negotiating support, for example: "I need to study at the kitchen table between 19:00 and 21:00 every night." Also remember to give them some feedback from time-to-time on how your studying is going and use the time productively (no chatting on Facebook when you're supposed to be studying).

Take some time now to write down what you need from those closest to you and how you can negotiate with them. Reality check! What happens if you don't get the support you were hoping for? It may not always be possible for others to support your studies - perhaps they have their own challenges or don't share your career or study vision. If this is the case, you need to think about how you can redefine this challenge as a motivation to focus on your studies and on the things you can control. [Read more](#) about how you can think differently about challenges by focusing on the things you can control.

Activity 2: Create and expand your personal learning network

Unisa has a number of support services that can help you create and expand your personal learning network.

- There are various support services available at [Unisa's regional centres](#), including student administration, counselling services, student affairs, libraries and academic literacy services.
- Your lecturer(s) and e-tutor (if applicable) are there to support you in terms of the academic content of your modules.
- If you are a student living with a disability, please connect with [ARCSWiD](#) (Advocacy and Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities).
- [Unisa Radio](#) is a talk radio station that broadcasts live online. Programming focuses on issues that are important to Unisa students, ranging from current affairs, financial issues to learning more about Unisa.

Activity 3: Connect with other students

Connecting with other students will enable you to have discussions about your studies. You'll hear about other students' successes and challenges, and together, you can support one another. Find fellow students on myUnisa and via other online platforms.

[First-Year Experience@Unisa.](#)

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

From the Student Retention Unit...all the best with your studies.